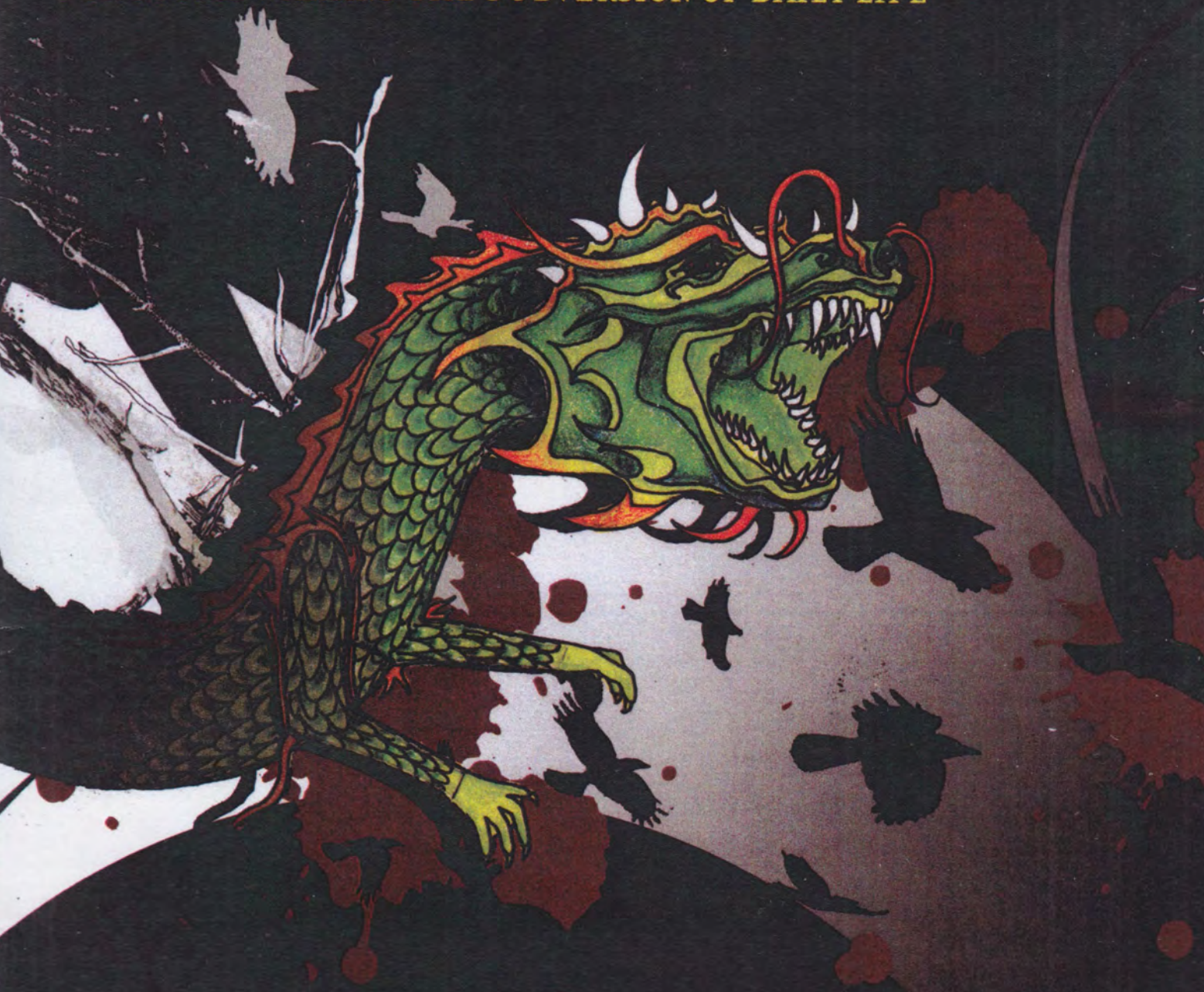


A MURDER OF CROWS

FOR SOCIAL WAR AND THE SUBVERSION OF DAILY LIFE

MARCH 2007
ISSUE #2
\$3.00



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INSURRECTION IN BANGLADESH, SIX NATIONS REOCCUPATION, WAR ON PROGRESS, STRATEGY OF REPRESSION, TECHNOLOGY & CONTROL ON THE BORDER, OAXACAN REVOLT & RECUPERATION, CRITIQUE OF ANIMAL LIBERATION, GREEN SCARE & AFFINITY, AND MORE...

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

We do not assume that our world is inevitably heading towards a liberatory transformation of social relations. Misery, work, starvation, slavery, war, and ecological destruction are present on a scale never before seen. Why would we think that we could have any effect upon this state of affairs? Why do we believe that we could possibly challenge the ever-accelerating rush towards a bleak future of greater social control and ecological collapse? Because we are unwilling to lie down and eat shit while we are around.

If there is a choice between cynicism and hopelessness, or a determined and focused attack on the present social order, we choose the latter. While it may be true that the odds are stacked against us, there are thousands of instances of resistance, revolt, and mutual aid that indicate the possibility of subverting the present social order and of relating in radically different ways. Thus our choice stems not from blind idealism or hopeful naiveté, but rather from a desire and willingness to fight against the misery that surrounds us.

We find ourselves confronted on all sides by those who would prefer to see things stay as they are, though perhaps with a friendlier face. Activists, non-governmental organizations, parties, and unions are attempting to channel discontent into state-sanctioned avenues for change. There are calls to build mass movements, to revitalize the unions, to protest endlessly against corporations, to vote in referendums, to support our community leaders, or to take part in dozens of other schemes that only serve to defuse social conflict. Democratic ideology and the Left smother social combativeness beneath their talk of rights, dialogue, and reconciliation. We seek a decisive break with this state of affairs and propose a practice based on direct action, autonomous self-organization, conflictuality, and revolutionary solidarity. We are part of the social war, not the vanguard, nor mere supporters of the struggles of others.

Unfortunately, there is a sad lack of communication between those who would prefer to bury this system rather than reform it. Thus a primary intention of this journal is to encourage greater dialogue and critical thought concerning methods and strategies employed in social struggle. We also hope to expand our critiques of the various social institutions that dominate and exploit us. The purpose of sharing critical analysis is to develop approaches to social struggle that are not only informed by the success and failures of the past, but also by the current social context as it evolves and changes.

Due to the reality of repression, it is necessary to have an honest and upfront discussion of the state's attempts to suppress social struggle. For us, repression presents not a few problems. We must choose our battles wisely, keeping in mind the possible consequences, but also realizing that these consequences do not guarantee our defeat. The state's ability to neutralize revolt will only spread as far as we let it. Our strength in overcoming repression lies with others acting in solidarity with us, in the same way that we would act in solidarity with them.

What we seek is a break with servitude, the spread of revolt, the firing of imagination, and the bursting forth of mutual aid and solidarity. This is a fight in which the stakes are nothing less than our very lives, and we have already waited far too long. The seeds of this society's destruction will be born from our determined attack against everything that stands in our way.

OPENER:

A year has passed, and subversive tensions have burst forth from the fault lines of the social order: the struggle against the CPE in France, student strikes in Chile, street battles in Nicaragua, continued riots and uprisings in China, squat defense in Denmark, and others we'll never hear about. The lie of social-peace would like nothing better than to erase these conflicts and deny their capacity to break with the normality of subservience. To us, the people that are the driving force of these struggles are the living embodiment of an active refusal to bow before the global work camp.

In the revolts of the year past, many of us found ourselves inspired by these struggles. Yet these, like many before them, passed through time like so many forgotten events. We see the discussion of revolt often deteriorating into cheerleading and superficial analysis, both of which make us sick. Those with their ear to the ground may know of the events that took place in Oaxaca, Mexico. There an energetic social movement was in conflict with the Mexican state, but portions of the struggle adhered to the prevailing political logic of representation and democratic dialogue. This is precisely the kind of situation in which acritical commentary debilitates our capacity to dynamically understand and intervene in the course of events. "This is What Recuperation Looks Like" takes a closer look at the various organizations and politicians that affected the path of this social conflict. In addition to the rebellion in Oaxaca, there was also the much larger, and much more destructive insurrection that swept through Bangladesh this past year. "Setting Hell on Fire" gives you all the lovely details of factory destruction and police beatings, and also analyzes the development and future of this cascade of fury. Another article takes an in-depth look at the ongoing occupation by Six Nations people in Canada, which was inspiring because of the open clashes with the state, the high degree of solidarity amongst native people, and the defiant reclamation of traditional territory.

Many of us are not strangers to recent state repression both here and abroad. The "radical" response to it has been more of the same. Some people have distanced themselves and withdrawn support, doing exactly what the state wants. Other people defended direct action with dominant social ideas and the state's useless notions of justice. Still others pandered to the media public opinion machine by presenting comrades as harmless and innocent do-gooders, like the Salvation Army Santas who beg for scraps of metal in the dead of winter outside of some shitty mall. We think the saying, "if the innocent deserve our support, the guilty deserve it even more," is a much better frame of reference. Shallow understandings of and spineless reactions to repression are detrimental to the revolutionary evolution of social movements. "Repression as State Strategy" addresses repression in its larger context as a long-term state strategy for destroying revolutionary threats in particular and oppositional tendencies in general. As recent events have proven, the state's repression has been effective in exploiting the lack of affinity and commonality amongst us. Lee Hunter's article, "Repression and Its Discontents," addresses the "Green Scare" and proposes

practical ways we can build a stronger base and combat the fear spread by the state.

Repression, unfortunately, is not the only problem we have to face. Capital is continuing to tighten the technological noose around our necks: commodifying and altering the biology of living things, weaving a web of surveillance and tracking technology, furthering the spread of the industrial order, and substituting face-to-face communication with sterilized implements like cell phones and the internet. As of late the discussion of technology has been wasting away into ideologically-divisive dead ends between so-called "greens" and "reds." We hope to reorient the debate about progress, removing it from the ideological dumpsters that many are so fond of diving into. Towards this end we present two articles, one, a translation about the struggle against the High Velocity Train in northwest Italy, and another, "The Arms of Exploitation," that addresses development and technology as impositions of class society.

For those of us in the US, who isn't tired of hearing politicians and reactionary white Americans complain about the so-called invasion of illegal immigrants? These people love the border like they love their immigrant-picked apples and oranges. We won't hide our hatred of everything about borders; the piece "Fortress Everywhere" will give you the low down. And finally, an article sure to offend many and hopefully interest most, is a critique of the animal liberation movement and ideology—a critique we feel is long overdue.

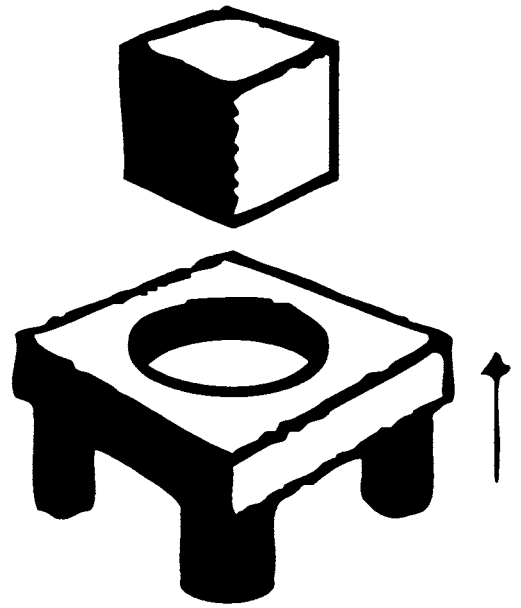
You might notice we haven't yet had any articles about US wars and occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is not due to any lack of interest on our part, but rather an unwillingness to contribute to the mass of wasted words, which merely repeat the usual, tired formulations of the "anti-war movement." We have seen the continually worsening situation in Iraq, in which sectarian militias and other states-in-waiting are building up piles of human corpses alongside the US military. These rackets deserve nothing but contempt for their continual human sacrifices to the altar of capitalism, albeit Islamic capitalism. But we won't busy ourselves with purely symbolic demonstrations, which are about as exciting as standing in line at the post office. The anti-war marches, so loved by guilt-ridden liberals and activists, clearly haven't stopped anything and have *actually* increased the amount of shitty slogans on poster board. Most opponents of the war either do not recognize, or deny, that the mechanism of war is fundamental to states and necessary for the expansion of the economy. Hundreds of thousands of people are dying in the Middle East not simply because of George Bush and oil, but because capitalism is allowed to continue and expand. War is healthy for capital because the bombs dropped —commodities in themselves— destroy other commodities in the form of buildings, infrastructure, and so on, creating the need for replacement. The war is only going to be stopped when we stop the economy.

We hope you enjoy the issue, but most of all we hope you find something useful in the pages that follow. Feel free to give us feedback, send submissions, and contribute large amounts of cash.

A Murder of Crows

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THE CONVENIENCE OF NOT THINKING: ON IDEOLOGICAL BOXES



The few reviews of *A Murder of Crows*, along with what little feedback we have received, have labeled us as insurrectionary anarchists. While we do not reject this label, we want to address the limitations that such labeling presents.

One thing that must be stated again and again is that insurrectionary anarchism is primarily a methodology, or a way of theoretically conceiving of, and practically organizing ourselves for, revolutionary action. Thus there are core ideas that define this particular perspective, but there is no insurrectionary anarchist orthodoxy. The analysis written in *AMOC*, should not be understood as simply an insurrectionary anarchist perspective on a particular topic. Our writings are our perspectives alone, not those of a particular milieu. Understanding our writings as something that represents other people, or an ideology, implies a level of uniformity within insurrectionary anarchist thought that simply does not exist. We are not interested in speaking on anyone else's behalf; we speak only for ourselves.

When we write articles for this magazine, or for any other occasion, it is not to push the insurrectionary anarchist line so that we can gain adherents or simply differentiate ourselves from other anarchists. We are first and foremost interested in critically examining specific situations, movements, theories, and practices. While we have major disagreements with other anarchists on a variety of issues, we are still interested in *communicating* with them and not interested in *excommunicating* them. We think that the analysis in our magazine should be useful and relevant to many anarchists, communists, and radicals regardless of their particular label. Labels are not the basis for action, affinity is, and we share affinity with many beyond the label of insurrectionary or anarchist.

While labels can be of use when making generalizations for the sake of expediency, they often reinforce ideological attachments and limit people's ability to think critically. This is perhaps the most banal and annoying aspect. There are certainly facets of contemporary North American anarchism that make us want to vomit, but we aren't interested in sectarian wars of words, nor are we interested in the "you're okay, I'm okay" false unity of others. Instead of sniping at one another from the trenches, we're interested in understanding similarities *and* differences so that we can find out who our allies are, and who are allies are not. In doing so, we hope to discover our commonalities and collectively destroy this fucked up world.

SETTING HELL ON FIRE:

SOLIDARITY AND DESTRUCTION IN BANGLADESH



In early October of 2006, Bangladesh saw the latest surge of garment worker violence, which was both uncontrolled and destructive. Widespread striking crippled the textile industry. As the factories lay dormant or smoldering from worker revenge, the revolt broke out of the confinement of the shop floor. Main highways were blockaded for hours, bringing the mechanical rhythms of commodity flow to a standstill. Policemen were targeted and attacked, ending for some time their unquestioned monopoly on violence. Offices, stores, and commercial vehicles—necessary for capitalist functioning but offensive to our senses—were smashed, trashed, and set alight. The forces of order lost their grip on those subject to the nightmare of daily capitalist routines. Even the unions, so useful in bringing social peace, largely failed to manipulate the rebellion into negotiation and compromise. In recent years, there have been few moments as joyfully destructive as this. To understand the situation and conflicts that present themselves today, we should first take a look at the history of Bangladesh and the social tension that exists there.

A Background

The Bangladeshi nation-state is little over half a century old. It was created after the partition of India in 1947 into the Indian Federation, now modern-day India, and East and West Pakistan. The official reason for the partition was to prevent religious wars between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority. Hindus were placed into India and Muslims into Pakistan, and then Pakistan was subdivided into two territories. Most of the country was composed of the southernmost delta of the Ganges—mostly swamps and mangroves—that remained virtually deserted until 1947. The division of Pakistan into two separate territories forced large numbers of the exploited into East Pakistan, which would later become Bangladesh. This exodus was imposed upon people, in part, under pressure from the Hindu capitalist class who wanted to keep the more economically viable regions to themselves. The artificial increase in Bangladesh's population, as a result of this forced movement

of workers, was soon followed by a population explosion that has grown to 120 million people today, making it one of the most densely-populated countries in the world.¹

Decades later, in the 1980s, a global recession resulted in austerity measures being imposed upon Bangladesh's economy by international financial institutions, thereby increasing the precarity of the exploited's condition and furthering capital's continued expansion. Wage cuts, price increases, devaluation, and massive lay-offs were implemented. During these years, the ruling Bangladesh National Party (BNP) imposed layoffs on an estimated 30,000 workers in the railway, jute, and airlines industries. While poverty intensified throughout the country, eventually so too did its proletarian responses in the early 1990s.

In January 1992, demonstrations by several thousand young workers met brutal repression in Dhaka, the capital. A year later, repression of striking garment workers was underway. These actions were no doubt supported by the World Bank. Also, representatives from the European Union contributed to this process, urging the Bangladeshi government to go even further in its restructuring by closing down twelve unprofitable garment factories, resulting in several thousand being laid-off.

It was around this time that divisions in the Bangladeshi working class emerged. The rivalries of ethnicity, posited as "Hindu" and "Muslim," appeared. These polarizations, supported by the state and capitalists, sought to redirect and diffuse the worker rebellions. Major trade unions played their role as recuperators. In March of 1993, the unions tried to contain the explosive energy of the workers by calling for a union-led general strike. They were ineffectual in containing it; the strike broke free from union control and was taken over by workers already several weeks into a rebellion. The national economy was paralyzed as the exploited blockaded most of the country's main roads and railways.

The BNP suffered a loss of credibility due to their inability to handle the social conflict. In October 1993, four universities were temporarily closed, having been described by the government

as "centers of conspiracy and terrorism." The failures of the BNP led other factions of the ruling class to propose their own alternatives. From November 1993 and throughout 1994, the Awami League, and other so-called opposition parties, blamed the BNP for the dissatisfaction of workers, paving the way to their own rise to power. The Awami League exploited widespread resentment by trying to push the struggle into parliamentary action by advocating a boycott of the National Assembly and calling for new elections.

The rebellion, however, went undiminished. By April 26th of 1994, striking workers shut down Dhaka. Strikes continued throughout various industries in April, May, and June of that year. In July, self-labeled oppositional political parties attempted to manage this situation and called for a day to "defend democracy against the rise of Islamic fundamentalism." Trade unions backed the Awami League's program of reform and recuperation by organizing non-violent work stoppages. They also negotiated settlements with the government. The state rewarded them for their help by dropping charges against ten union leaders. Meanwhile, five workers were sentenced to life imprisonment for "terrorist activities" due to their role in organizing demonstrations, strikes, pickets, and sabotage, outside of union management or state sanction.

This collaboration between unions, capital, and the state was still largely incapable of directing the rage of the workers into easily managed forms. Throughout the summer, in the port of Chittagong, a vital economic center for the area's industrial production, traffic was paralyzed by dockworkers and others who went on solidarity strikes. They made sure no freight was loaded or unloaded, effectively ending the movement of goods so vital to capital's lifeblood. In September 1994, further strikes and demonstrations took place in Dhaka and

again in Chittagong. This rebellion spread outside of the urban economic centers and in October 1994, a large portion of the jute harvest was burned in reaction to wage cuts in that industry.

In December 1994, while wildcat strikes, demonstrations, and sabotage wrecked the nation's economy, entire military barracks mutinied. Thousands of poorly paid and poorly equipped police officers and auxiliary militiamen disobeyed and refused orders. They occupied two barracks, taking 22 officers hostage and taking control of the headquarters and training center in Dhaka. After four days, in which the mutiny also spread to other provinces, repression began in earnest. The army's special forces attacked the occupied barracks with artillery guns, rockets, helicopters, tear gas, and armored cars. Some four people were killed and 50 wounded.

At the end of January 1995, thousands of garment workers went on strike again. They blockaded roads and railways all across the country. The port of Chittagong exploded with social conflict and demonstrations continued throughout the country. Towards the end of the year, no trains, buses, boats, or airplanes were running. Bangladesh was completely paralyzed. Goods were blocked from leaving all depots, stations, ports, and airports. The national economy was brought to a standstill for a short time.

Wildcat strikes gripped the beginning of 1996, prompting the use of the military to calm the crippling collective action of the

exploited. Military presence continued, as well as mass arrests, filling prisons beyond capacity. The protectors of capital, being confronted on all sides by economic sabotage, sacked the acting prime minister and organized further electoral campaigns to restore order and restart production. The Awami League declared victory in the elections. Despite all the political parties backing the black hole of the ballot box, a high rate of abstention was reported throughout the country.² The struggles of the exploited had calmed for a time, concealing themselves within the restless quiet of the machinery of capital. Capitalism had hoped to relegate rebellion to the dimming memory of the rebels. This calm indicated *nothing* of the future.

Revolt Bears Itself Again: The Capital Explodes

Nearly a decade later, in late May through June of 2006, fierce clashes began again in the Bangladeshi garment industry. Around 4000 factories in Dhaka went on strike, 16 factories were burned down, and hundreds more ransacked and looted. In factories and neighborhoods, workers fought street battles with cops and private security forces while main roads were blockaded. Three workers were shot to death, thousands more were injured, and several thousand were jailed by capital's guard dogs. Eventually, the state ordered in the military to restore

order and force the turning of the economy's wheels. They had only limited success in the face of widespread rebellion.

Around 4000 factories in Dhaka went on strike, 16 factories were burned down, and hundreds more ransacked and looted.

Though the signs of imminent danger were no doubt felt even in the calm, a revolt began without reservation on the 20th of May in Sripur in the Gazipur district of Dhaka. A thousand garment workers gathered at the FS Sweater Factory, refusing to work until three other workers

were released from custody. Factory managers locked the striking workers in the factory, cutting the power and water supplies. The workers fought their way out of the sweltering heat and sickness of the building and gathered on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway. They barricaded themselves there for six hours while also fighting police who were trying to clear the pathways of commerce. One person was killed and 70 others, including cops and journalists, were injured.

Two days later, on May 22nd, in the Savar Export Processing Zone (EPZ) outside of Dhaka, factory security attacked workers who were demanding payment of back wages. The workers responded by going to neighboring factories and calling on others for support. Solidarity gained steam and continued as workers went from one factory to another, eventually gathering an estimated 20,000 people. By the afternoon, hundreds of factories in the Savar and New EPZs were shut down by strikes. Two factories were torched, hundreds of others were sabotaged, and over 300 company and management vehicles were smashed up. The main roads in Dhaka were paralyzed by blockades. Clashes with police culminated in the use of guns on workers, but it did not prevent the revolt from spreading further.³

The next day, revolt spread to more factories; the industrial areas of Dhaka were shut down by a general strike, sabotage, and solidarity. The rebellion in the industrial suburbs, where factories

were being looted, spread into the capital. Cars were destroyed and commercial buildings were attacked; the transportation and offices of factory managers were duly targeted. Fearing more reprisals, factory owners agreed to various demands: an end to the repression, the release of arrested workers, a raising of wages, weekly time off, and holidays. This did not quell the anger that had, for some time, been building against the misery and impoverishment of industrial production. Media photographers—eager to flatten the rebellion into a spectacle—were attacked, more roads were blockaded, and battles with police and factory security continued. Thousands of strikers torched four factories and rampaged through hundreds more. The military was called in, making the ready-use of brute force and weaponry apparent to those now tasting the sweetness of vengeful solidarity. By the evening, some 3,000 soldiers and armed cops were occupying the places of unrest. Though things had calmed in the face of a spectacular show of force, the managers of capital were willing to drop their hard-line stance against union activity by bringing in union representatives to manipulate the rebels into a peaceful dialogue. This was clearly recognition of the potential of unions to recuperate revolt.

In June, clashes continued in the garment industry over the still-meager concessions, which were used in an attempt to dampen the flames of discontent. Wildcat strikes hit individual factories every so often, joined at times by other workers in solidarity. Battles with the police, army, and factory security continued, as did attacks on company property. Occasionally, military forces closed off entire Export Processing Zones. The garment industry estimated \$70 million in losses in a compensation claim submitted to the government.⁴ The capitalists were angry because of the ineffectual response by the government in its attempts to make the conflict submit to social peace. The Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), an armed police division, was brought in to restore order. When wildcat strikes broke out at a particular factory and spread outside of it, the RAB came in to disperse angry workers before destruction became uncontrollable. This method was not always successful. Conflict and disruption continued, but lulled due to the threat and reality of state violence and the compromises brokered by unions.

A Rebellion That Was Never Killed

At the end of September of 2006, class conflict brought itself to the fore again. Widespread violence broke out as a reaction to the government's announcement to fix the monthly minimum wage for textile workers at 1,662 taka (USD\$25) after four months of negotiations between the garment factory owners and the Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) federation of 16 unions. But several other garment workers federations rejected the amount set by the government, calling a strike in the textile factories, and demanding a minimum wage of 3,000-taka (USD\$44) per-month to offset the spiraling cost of living.

Currently, garment workers earn between \$15 monthly for beginners and up to \$36 monthly for the most experienced sewers.⁵ On average, a garment worker earns a third of what a farm worker makes. The garments sector is Bangladesh's biggest export industry, earning 76% of Bangladesh's foreign exchange, and fetching some \$7 billion in the last fiscal year ending in June 2006. The garment factories employ 40% of Bangladesh's industrial workforce.⁶ It is also the country's second biggest employer after agriculture, with some 4,200 factories employing about 2.2 million workers, 85% of whom are women aged 12 years and up.⁷ Many of these women are escaping the poorest rural areas only to join the poorest urban ones—the city slums where a quarter of Dhaka's population lives.

The garment industry is notorious for poor working conditions, physical and sexual abuse, and meager pay.⁸ It is not uncommon for workers to spend 13 hours a day, seven days a week, working. In many factories, workers are heavily fined for absences or for arriving late more than three days in a row, and overtime is often mandatory. Likewise, garment workers are widely aware and resentful of the factory owners driving luxury cars and living in houses, while they are forced to live and work in appalling conditions. Many workers are women who have children and live in squalid and confined living spaces, barely able to afford enough food to feed their families.⁹ In a world run according to capitalism, precariousness and poverty are the burdens weighed upon the exploited. In Bangladesh, this misery bore a rage that had never subsided.

Strikes spread throughout several garment-producing regions in and around Dhaka. Solidarity among garment workers not only brought production to a standstill, but also resulted in damage and destruction of factories, attacks on law enforcement, and blockades of roads and highways, the arteries of capitalist movement. Those striking continued to prove themselves *outside* of union direction or control. On September 30th, workers from several factories gathered in Uttara, a northern suburb of Dhaka, and blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh road. They threw stones at police and damaged dozens of vehicles, including six police vans, and some shops. Police used batons, rubber bullets, and tear gas to disperse thousands of garment workers, and at least 50 people were injured.

On October 1st, security guards beat up three strikers at the Syntax Sweater Factory in Uttara. Garment workers then went on a rampage, demanding wage increases, bonuses, and back pay. Other workers in the same factory got on the highway and, from there, pelted the building with stones. As police rushed in to disperse the demonstrators, hundreds of workers from adjacent garment factories supported them by blocking another highway. They then went on to attack various businesses. Another group tried to break into a bank. After more garment workers began blocking the highway, police charged with batons. The workers retaliated by hurling bricks and stones at them. A few thousand chased the police towards the Uttara police station and then broke out the station's windows and damaged seven police vans, five vehicles parked inside the station, and a makeshift police camp.¹⁰ Traffic was halted for four hours until the police and the RAB brought things under control. Some 16 people were arrested, and a hundred people, including ten policemen and three journalists, were injured.

Worker violence flared again on October 9th. In Dhaka, clashes broke out between police and garment workers when police tried to disperse thousands of people who were once again blocking streets and damaging vehicles. In the morning, workers in the Uttara, Abdullahpur, Tongi, Mirpur, Pallabi, and Savar areas poured out of their factories in the thousands and went to factories still operating and closed them down. They broke into smaller groups, attacking and looting factories and businesses. Vehicles were set on fire and roads blockaded. Due to their numbers, the police were helpless to stop the violence. The police's main tactic in disrupting the workers was to contain their movement and isolate them within limited areas, relying on teargas and baton charges. Workers responded by attacking the police with stones. Police detained at least 20 people, and nearly 200 people were injured, including 15 policemen.

During the October 9th rebellion, seven garment factories were severely damaged, and 100 other factories were sabotaged to a lesser extent; three shopping malls and 50 vehicles were

also attacked. Workers set a public bus on fire on the outskirts of Dhaka, and others attempted to torch two garment factories in Pallabi.¹¹ Some raided the Uttara police station again and beat up the officer-in-charge, stealing his pistol in the process. A group of workers set fire to apparel at the Woodland garment factory in Mirpur, while another group burned four vehicles at the Azampur bus station in Uttara. Around 100 vehicles were set on fire in different areas of Mirpur and Uttara. By late afternoon, RAB paramilitaries and police reinforcements managed to regain some control, but not before massive havoc and destruction was caused in the industrial areas.

In Abdullahpur on October 9th, another group went on a rampage, smashing vehicles along the way. They pelted policemen with bricks and sticks when they arrived. The police took shelter at a gas station in the area, but the workers broke in, smashed it up, and beat the policemen. When several severely injured policemen were being taken to the hospital in an ambulance, the workers attacked the ambulance and beat up the

policemen *again*. Obviously, the police, manifestations of state force and violence, did not operate without repercussions from those revolting.

Also on that day in Savar, 15 miles northwest of Dhaka, vehicles were damaged and 25 garment factories attacked. Police arrested some 50 workers, including Savar's regional leader of the National Garment Workers United Forum. After hearing of the arrest, workers hurled bricks at the Cannon Garments Ltd., Apparel Ltd. and JK Garments factories. More than 1,500 workers from other local garment factories, upon hearing the news, came out and barricaded the Dhaka-Aricha and Nabinagar-Kaliakoir highways and damaged over 30 vehicles, including a police car.¹² Both highways remained blocked for about two hours while around a dozen garment factories in the surrounding area were attacked.

This garment worker violence coincided with several more conflicts breaking out due to continued power cuts across Bangladesh. The general lack of infrastructure in Bangladesh contributed to the power shortages. It also points to the primacy of the needs of industry over the needs of people. In response to these power outages, roads were blockaded while thousands of demonstrators fought police. People attacked the offices and property of the national electricity supplier. In many parts of Dhaka and elsewhere, police were overwhelmed by the large number of people revolting. Thousands made improvised roadblocks with burning logs, successfully stopping movement on the main highway leading from the capital to the port of Chittagong. Police admitted that they were incapable of controlling the situation. While these actions may seem to express the desire for industrial development, and its resulting dehumanization, they more accurately point to the contradiction between capitalism and those it exploits. Poverty and exploitation are not easy to swallow, especially when basic needs go unfulfilled.

On the Opening of the Floodgates

In one of the world's poorest and most densely populated countries, social tension is not hard to find. Bangladeshi garment labor is competitive on the world market, making the managers of capital intent on keeping the exploited's condition of poverty at abysmal levels, all while sucking profits from their blood. The immensity of the destitution, which so often is tolerated, may sow the seeds of its undoing. The economic blackmail of capitalist society confines us to its rules for survival and, in some ways, the workers may know this. Presented are two choices: starvation or debilitation and death by machine. Instead, those

who rebelled chose their own alternatives: the destruction of machines, a paralysis of commerce, and an attack on the agents of the state who enforce the productive regime. These recent clashes are part of a wider insurgency taking place throughout Bangladesh against the miserable conditions that dominate people's lives. So the damn breaks, and the waters, which had for so long been held in stasis, have rushed outward.

Presented are two choices: starvation or debilitation and death by machine. Instead, those who rebelled chose their own alternatives: the destruction of machines, a paralysis of commerce, and an attack on the agents of the state who enforce the productive regime.

Within impermanent moments, there come the fires that would sweep this world into oblivion.

However, a variety of recuperative forces exist in Bangladesh, and in the country with the third-largest Muslim majority, it appears that Islamists have had very little ability to manage these situations for their own ends. There is a large student-based Islamist movement and several Islamist parties in parliament. It remains to be seen, however, whether Islamic fundamentalism will begin to feed off of despair and push the social conflict into the trap of religious indoctrination and self-sacrificial devotion. Likewise, Islamists attempt to transform social conflict into a war of religion in which class lines are obscured behind a blindly devoted community of believers. They would turn us all into martyrs, protecting the hell on earth with the lies of a paradise in heaven. It's obvious how they've deformed social struggles in such parts of the world like Palestine, Iraq, Somalia, and Indonesia by turning proletarians into the cannon fodder for jihad. In Bangladesh there have been reports of attacks by Islamists on unions attempting to organize the predominately woman workforce in the garment factories. This does not mean that unionization is a worthy alternative.

There are currently some 16 legally recognized unions that claim to represent garment workers despite the fact that unionization is very low. Unions play their role as mediator between boss and worker, and most of them function as their own business, maintaining contacts with local and international Non-Governmental Organizations for the purpose of receiving large grants. Many trade unions are also known for their role in using workers' struggles as tools for political parties, as seen in the recent elections.¹³ While the National Garment Workers Federation is considered to be an exception to this, they still seek to represent workers and negotiate the terms of their exploitation.¹⁴ Higher wages and better working conditions have already been implemented, to a small extent, purely to diffuse the destructive anger of the factory workers.

One important thing that must be mentioned is our uncertainty of the gender composition of the revolts. Photographs of the rioting from mainstream news sources indicate a primarily, or wholly, male-based participation in the destructive and violent actions. Obviously, these images are merely photographs taken by a reporter and do not necessarily give us a complete or accurate depiction. However, if the garment industry is roughly 85% women, there should certainly be more women involved in these actions. Yet, the photographs indicate that there is a high degree of sexual division within the revolt, with men taking part in certain actions and women taking part in others. This is an anti-revolutionary facet of this insurrection that must be rejected in full because it is merely a reproduction of the subservient roles imposed by this society. Violence is not the realm of men; it is the realm of exploited people reappropriating their lives.

And what of the violent destruction? There already exists a culture of political and social violence in Bangladesh. In a nation-state built upon forced relocations and the direst of poverty, violence does not draw the same hesitance it does in parts of the world swayed by the ideology of democracy. Thus, we should not take these riots and rebellions out of their social context. Nor should we deny that violence seems most natural as a response to the abjection of the injuries, impoverishment, and death within the gears of industrial capitalism. When faced with the bleakness of a future resulting from the bleakness of the present, destruction without moral constraint seems the most appropriate of responses.

Yet the widespread revolts in the summer of 2006 and then in the fall of 2006 did not take a dynamic direction. Its evolution was limited to a resumption of the old with the addition of new crumbs from which to feed. This is the deception of capitalist logic: accommodate or die. Within either of these options is continued submission to the barest form of survival and a rejection of the possibility of completely overturning the social order. This is where the activity in Bangladesh appears to be at a crossroads, and has yet to make the leap outside of the paths presented by capital. In this way, widespread violence in Bangladesh has become an almost-institutionalized form of collective bargaining by riot. So the violence risks becoming simply a tactic for achieving reforms. Beyond the sporadic eruptions targeted against the social order must come a revolutionary analysis. Action divorced from radical ideas and vision will only lead to more dead ends. It is the lack of ideas that remains the biggest weakness in situations such as these.

Where is left to go? Bangladesh was created through capitalist dispossession. So, too, do the majority of people confined to its borders remain dispossessed of the means to fulfill their needs without wage slavery and economic transactions. Life is reduced to various prostitutions that do not allow one to avail oneself autonomously. The revolts in Bangladesh appear to still suffer from the prevailing social logic. It will remain so until no longer are demands made of the system, but rather, relations are transformed through the system's destruction. The necessities of living outside and beyond capitalism must be confronted. The expropriation and communization of the land and the development of autonomous modes of social interaction are but starting points in this process of transformation. Sustaining ourselves, both physically and socially, outside of capital's grasp, is of utmost importance.

Violence and solidarity have made the Bangladeshi working class quite successful in achieving their demands, whether they are higher wages or stopping industrial development projects.¹⁵ The structures that had appeared so constant and inviolable had been stripped bare and lay in ruin. From a dynamic, destructive, and willful projectuality, the working class can abolish its position

as the working class instead of languishing in the confinement of union-directed activity or exploitation by politicians large and small. Likewise, solidarity with revolt can spread the conflict beyond the initial places of confrontation. In Bangladesh, this was understood by those who fought alongside striking workers or who left their own factories in solidarity with them. The companies that use the textile factories of Dhaka sell their commodities all over the world, especially in the mass consumption-driven markets of the West. Thus, the possibilities for targeting them, and partaking in a shared struggle against capital, are global. Indeed, who does not feel sorrow in knowing of revolutionary fires burning far away, while a social calm reigns at home?

In Bangladesh, the face of misery was exposed. The molds were broken and uncontained destruction was directed towards its hideous body. Through the passing days of attack, the social order no longer went ungrazed by revolt. The blood of the wretched past was spilled, just a little, and we delighted in those moments.

Kasimere Bran

Editorial Note: The lack of images in this article is due to the small number and poor quality of photographs that exist of these events

Endnotes

1. Bangladesh has a high population density of 810 inhabitants per square kilometer.
2. Most of the information about the struggles of the 1990s comes from "Bangladesh...Not Just Floods!" by the International Communist Group. <http://libcom.org/library/burma-struggles-riots-icg>
3. "Garment Workers Revolt in Bangladesh." *Libcom*. 14 July 2006. <http://libcom.org/news/article.php/bangladesh-garment-revolt-140706>
4. Same as footnote 6.
5. National Labour Committee. www.nlcnet.org. 2004
6. "Garment Workers Revolt in Bangladesh." *Libcom*. 14 July 2006. <http://libcom.org/news/article.php/bangladesh-garment-revolt-140706>
7. The number of garment factories increased from 50 in 1983 to around 4,000 in 2004. Around 2,800 of these factories are located in and around Dhaka city, while most of the remaining are in the port city of Chittagong. About 65% of the factories produce woven garments, 20% are engaged in knitting, while the remaining 15% are involved in sweater production.
8. "Many hurt in Bangladesh garment workers protest." *Reuters*. 10 Oct. 2006.
9. "Garment Exports Thrive on Dirt Wages." *Inter Press Service*. 29 Sept. 2006.
10. "RMG Workers Ransack Uttara Police Station." *The Daily Star*. 1 Oct. 2006.
11. "Garment Factory Workers Rampage Through Dhaka Over Pay." *AllHeadline News*. 10 Oct. 2006.
12. "More strikes and riots in Bangladesh..." <http://libcom.org/news/more-strikes-and-riots-in-bangladesh-garment-workers-take-the-offensive-again-12102006>
13. Since its adoption of democratic institutions in 1990, after a succession of military governments, the country has faced severe and persistent conflicts between its two major political parties, the Awami League (allied with left and secular parties) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (allied with Islamic parties). Whichever party is not in power tries to undermine the ruling party with direct action such as strikes and non-cooperation—general strikes being the preferred tactic. This is how unions are instrumental in Bangladeshi politics. This is also an example of direct action used purely tactically, not as an ethic of autonomy. (www.pinr.com)
14. In fairness, it should be noted that the NGWF of Bangladesh has the membership of workers in hundreds of factories, carries no legal recognition, and workers in all their factories strike and demonstrate together. The NGWF maintains its own campaigns and calls for international solidarity without the support of NGOs. Still, our critique of unions is based on their fundamental nature in seeking to negotiate the conditions of exploitation rather than seeking to abolish exploitation entirely.
15. For more on the stopping of industrial projects in Bangladesh, see our news section about the successful revolt against a massive mining project there.



REPRESSION AS STATE STRATEGY

Repression is a topic that is often discussed in the revolutionary milieu, but unfortunately it is a subject that is not well understood. Because of democratic baggage, repression is often understood as simply an anomalous and outrageous violation of rights. What people fail to comprehend is that repression is part of the standard operating procedure of any class society. There are those that rule and those who are ruled, and to maintain this divide, a combination of coercion and accommodation is necessary. To preserve the social structure of our society then, it is necessary to recuperate parts of social movements, and to repress the other parts. Essentially, repression is a strategy for maintaining power by capitalist ruling classes within nation-states. Thus, since it is a long-term strategy, it is *always* in motion and not some occasional occurrence.

When repression strikes and comrades are arrested, such as in the "green scare," the reaction of many is to disassociate themselves from those who are being attacked by the state. Liberals, progressives, and most activists draw up official statements denouncing violence, sabotage, and illegality, all in hopes of proving to the government that they are just good citizens who like to follow the rules and who are interested in "positive" social change. This spineless response is standard for the left, and serves to flank the state's actions. Disassociation is not only a cowardly act, but is also based on faulty logic.

The underlying premise of disassociation is that the state has reacted to a *specific* occurrence and that those being persecuted are responsible for bringing repression upon themselves and everyone else. Certainly there are specific acts that the state responds to, such as actions of the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), but this is not where repression stems from. In actuality, repression is a long-term strategy employed by the state regardless of specific illegal acts and is an attempt to maintain the status quo by any means necessary. Repression, then, is always present in many forms. It is the police, the courts, the prison system, the proliferation of security cameras, the immigrant detention centers and the like. If anyone needs further proof that the state doesn't merely punish people for breaking its laws, and instead represses in order to destroy its opposition, one need only take a look at recent events.

Some Recent Attacks

A well-known example of state repression within the anarchist milieu is the infiltration of various conferences, protests and even affinity groups by one particular state agent: Anna Davies.¹ Following the arrests of Lauren Weiner, Zachary Jenson and Eric McDavid in January 2006 for conspiracy to commit several acts of sabotage, the government revealed that one of the three's comrades was in fact in the employ of the state.² What's more is that the government funneled money to Anna to rent a house where planning allegedly took place and to pay for supplies to commit these alleged acts. When this information was revealed, comrades across the country quickly posted photographs of Anna to popular anarchist and activist sites, and within days a picture of Anna's activity was pieced together.

Rather than simply being involved with the three people arrested in California, Davies had been actively working for the FBI as far back as 2003. She has taken part in major protests such as the Democratic National Convention in 2004, the 2004 anti-G8 Protest in Georgia, the June 2005 Organization of American States protest in Florida, and the Bio-Democracy protest in Philadelphia, also in June of 2005. Along with major convergences, Davies attended anarchist conferences and gatherings in 2005 such as Feral Visions in the Appalachian Mountains and the CrimethInc Convergence in Indiana. On various Indymedia sites she also solicited photographs and video of protests under the guise of publicity, but it should be presumed that any information sent to her was added to the FBI's intelligence base.

So the intention behind her infiltration was not to help solve a particular case, or to investigate one specific crime. Instead, she was employed as an infiltrator to gather information about the anarchist scene in general. It should also not be surprising that the case that she is currently involved in focuses on alleged acts that were planned to occur in the future, not ones that had already occurred. Based solely on the evidence made available to the public, it is not hard to see that the FBI was facilitating these alleged crimes by renting a house for Davies and the three arrested people and funneling money via Davies for supplies. In effect, the state was justifying their existence through aiding and abetting. In the US government's latest terror war, arrests and examples need to be made; Weiner, Jenson, and McDavid have served this purpose quite well.

In addition to the case of Anna Davies is the 2003 infiltration of direct action anti-war groups in California. In July 2006, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Northern California released a detailed report in which they documented a variety of instances in which local police departments, along with the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center, placed officers into anti-war groups. First and foremost they infiltrated the groups in order to gather information, but more insidiously, the police

hoped to steer the organizations in a direction more useful to the state. When asked why officers had been placed in the San Francisco group Direct Action to Stop the War (DASW), Captain Howard Jordan of the Oakland Police Department stated: "if you put people in there from the beginning, I think we'd be able to gather the information and maybe even direct them to do something that we want them to do."³ Clearly the state's perspective is one of infiltrating in order to undermine.

This strategy manifested itself on multiple occasions. In April of 2003, DASW organized a picket at the Port of Oakland in opposition to the war in Iraq. At least one shipping company at the Port was handling war supplies, and the group organized to shut the port down for the day. Nearly 500 demonstrators took part, splitting into smaller groups to picket the various entrances to the port. The Oakland Police Department, however, was prepared. Through surveillance, police had already gathered information about the protest, and in this instance, they also brutally attacked demonstrators with rubber bullets, tear gas, and wooden dowel shots causing scores of injuries. In response to the police crackdown, DASW organized an anti-police brutality march in May of 2003. What members of the group did not know was that they had elected police infiltrators to plan out the route for their march. No one, not even the police, could fail to see the irony of that situation. While in their report the ACLU decries the actions of the police as evidence of misconduct, these acts should more importantly be viewed as evidence of the state's attempts to undermine and destroy opposition to it.

As shown by FBI infiltration of anarchist demonstrations and events and local police infiltration of protest groups, it is easy to see that they were not investigating crimes that had taken place, but rather they were investigating possibilities of concrete resistance, which by necessity, generally break the law. This shows that there are plenty of examples, and certainly many that we may never know about, which demonstrate that repression already exists and is underway. It is not intermittent, and does not always respond to particular violations of the law; it is a long-term strategy of the state to destroy opposition. This strategy, however, has wider implications beyond the bounds of the radical milieu and affects the exploited as a whole.

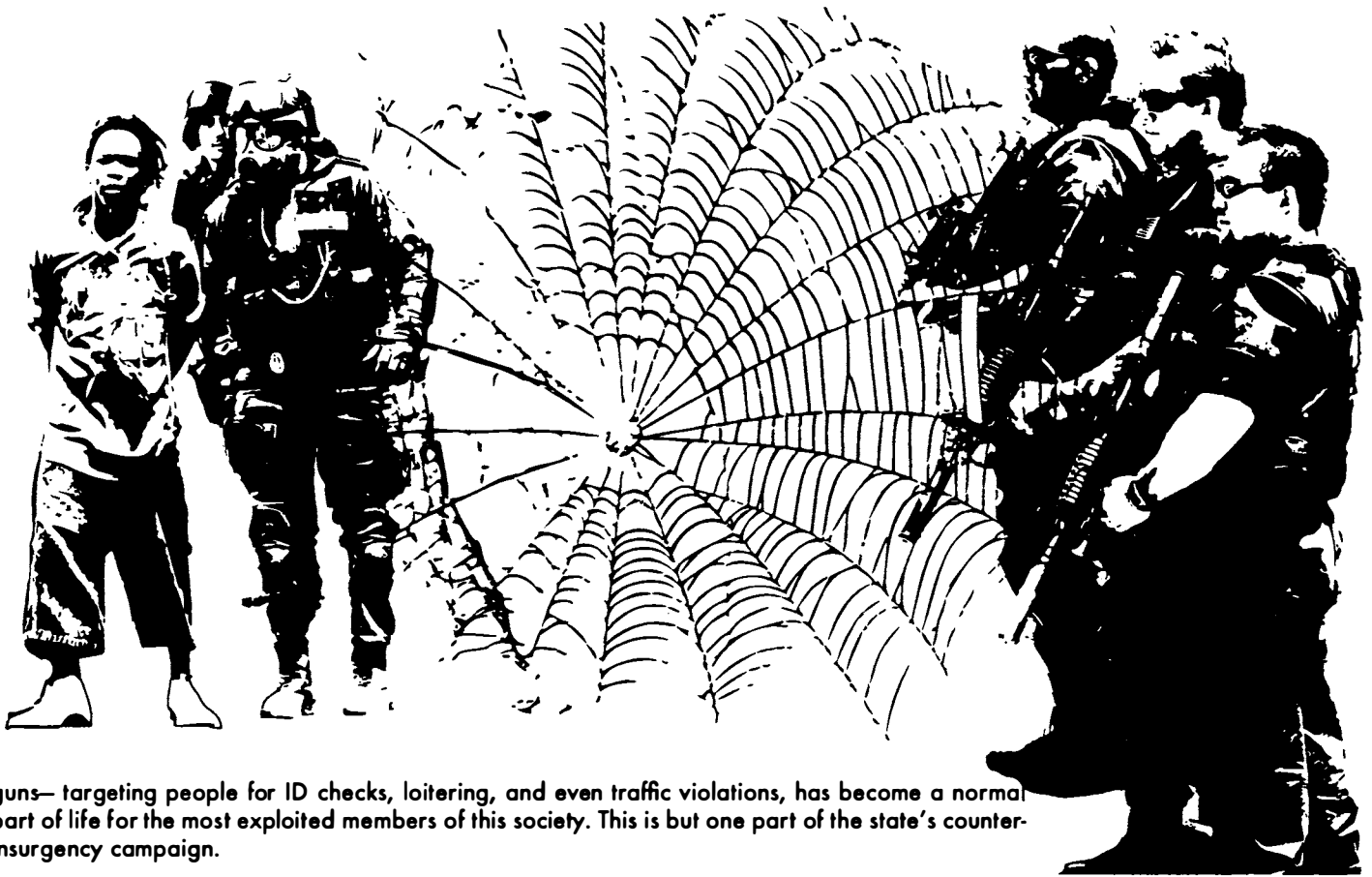
The New Repressive Strategy

Author Kristian Williams, in his book *Our Enemies in Blue: Police and Power in America*, examines fundamental changes in the repressive strategy of the United States government. His main observation, which he thoroughly documents with official papers and statements, is that following the upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s, the state switched to a strategy of permanent repression, or as he calls it, counter-insurgency. Learning from their past failures, the police developed a preemptive model of repression which sought to prevent insurgency before it happened. Williams outlines two major components functioning hand in hand: militarization and community policing.

Militarization is one of the most obvious changes within police departments in the United States. In city centers across the US, police departments are well armed and equipped for urban warfare. Not only has their weaponry been upgraded in a variety of ways, but also newer and more powerful firearms are available. Armored personnel carriers (APCs), helicopters and even tanks are at their disposal, as are a multitude of so-called non-lethal weapons such as tasers, tear gas, rubber bullets and pepper spray, which are known to kill and permanently injure people. But it is not only the tools, but also the manner of organization and the scope of the mission that define militarization.

Organizationally, many police departments were restructured along military lines into squads and platoons, and paramilitary units were created as well. Special Weapons and Tactics units, better known as SWAT teams, are a manifestation of militarization in terms of organization, armament, and dress. Created in the late 1960s, their first missions involved raids on Black Panther Party headquarters and on the hideout of the Symbionese Liberation Army. SWAT teams were also mobilized dozens of times in relation to the activities of the American Indian Movement at Wounded Knee. Now however, SWAT teams aren't simply used for "extreme" situations or in the case of potential shootouts; they are also used for routine patrolling in the ghettos of many major cities. In this way, paramilitary units -equipped with machine





guns—targeting people for ID checks, loitering, and even traffic violations, has become a normal part of life for the most exploited members of this society. This is but one part of the state's counter-insurgency campaign.

Community policing is the friendly face, and perhaps the more insidious side, of the new repressive strategy. Community policing developed in response to the state's inability to predict and control urban uprisings in the 60s and 70s and was designed, "to build a bond between the police and the public in hopes that this would increase police legitimacy, give them better access to information, intensify penetration of community life and expand the police mission."⁴ This is not the same as infiltration because it is an overt attempt to work with civic organizations, churches, homeowners, and the general public in order to transform people into the eyes and ears of the state. Some of the tactics employed include: neighborhood watch groups, public forums, meetings with religious and civic leaders, foot and bike patrols, a focus on minor offenses, citizen volunteer opportunities, and police sponsored community activities such as Night Out Against Crime.⁵ This is how the police and the state worm their way into the social networks of various neighborhoods in order to gain legitimacy. Therefore when force is used, it is presented as being validated by "community support."

Community policing has also expanded the role of the police from simply dealing with violations of the law to an overall focus on "public order" and "quality of life." This is based on the Broken Windows theory which argues that small issues such as rundown property and juvenile loitering eventually contribute to an ever-growing sense of disorder in the neighborhood and consequently, to greater violations of the law. This means that rather than simply focusing on serious offences, the police also focus on many smaller crimes that supposedly lower the quality of life and eventually snowball into great social disturbances. Quality of life issues include ridding neighborhoods of graffiti, breaking up homeless encampments, and dealing with noise complaints; this focus essentially promotes a zero-tolerance approach to crime. The underlying premise is that any amount of lawbreaking, whether it is jaywalking or kids hanging out on corners, contributes to ever-greater lawlessness.

The confluence of community policing and militarization amounts to nothing less than a consistent campaign of counter-insurgency.⁶ Penetrating communities and including common people in the state apparatus, in combination with paramilitary units and a war-based conception of crime, are part of a strategic shift to preempt any major disorder or uprisings. Poor neighborhoods and districts, especially black and Latino ghettos, which were the source of much insurgency during the 1960s and 1970s, are hit particularly hard by this preemptive strategy. Undoubtedly, since the exploited pose a permanent threat to the social order, there is a direct connection between this daily repression and the repressive activity focused specifically on radicals.

How to Deal

If we begin to understand repression as a strategy of the state that is continually in operation, then we must transform our way of dealing with it. In the US, radicals deal with it in a reactive way: first the state strikes, then we come out with posters, leaflets, statements, and attempts to raise money for our imprisoned comrades. This is of course assuming that repression is even responded to; most choose to look the other way as long as it poses no threat to themselves or their acquaintances. Unfortunately, the mentality of some is that those being targeted by the state are responsible for bringing repression upon themselves. Without simply repeating the usual principles of revolutionary solidarity, we feel the need to reaffirm that it's important to start using our heads and thinking about what can be done outside of the usual support campaigns. Comrades in Spain, once again, have given us some examples to learn from.

On February 9, 2006, two anarchist comrades, Ruben and Ignasi, were arrested in Barcelona for an arson attack on a prison labor company and for vandalism at a bank. The anarchist response to the arrests was immense. Graffiti and propaganda covered walls in many neighborhoods in Barcelona, and dozens of acts of sabotage were carried out in solidarity with them. Individuals attacked banks and ATMs across Spain, a satellite signal antenna was destroyed in Barcelona, and the offices of real estate companies were targeted. Public demonstrations were held in support of the imprisoned comrades, and on a few occasions in Barcelona, major intersections were shut down during rush hour, as banners flew and flyers were handed out to passersby. The acts of sabotage were not random; they were an extension of pre-existing fights against gentrification and the media's repeated efforts to label anarchists and autonomists as domestic terrorists. Thus they served to intertwine and deepen the implications of their resistance. And in their resistance, comrades in Spain employed a variety of tools: posters, graffiti, sabotage, protests, and blockades. Perhaps more importantly they demonstrated a refusal to allow the state to kidnap their comrades without repercussions.

Outside of the scope of friends and comrades being taken by the state, there is the daily repression that is ever growing. We need to get in the habit of resisting the daily indignities that are imposed upon us by this regime of repression. They will push us to see how far we will bend, to make us bow and show respect to authority. They hope to police our every move, to make simple things illegal, for the sake of constantly having a reason to interfere with our lives. This is manifesting itself in a variety of ways: the proliferation of video surveillance devices monitoring public spaces, constant harassment for identification, more aggressive policing of demonstrations, random searches, and more importantly, the racist policy of mass incarceration. All of these changes are the result of the convergence of interests between states and businesses with mutually reinforcing agendas. One of the most nefarious aspects of this growing network of control is the way in which it is normalized over time. We get used to being watched, inspected, harassed, beaten and treated like prisoners. The media is complicit in this process by continually promoting a climate of fear—fear of pedophiles, gangs, immigrants, and eco-terrorists—that serves to build democratic support for repression.

There are some precedents for struggle against the slow creep of repressive technologies. In Britain there has been widespread sabotage over the past several years of speed cameras, which seek to catch drivers violating the speed limit. Hundreds of

cameras have been destroyed across the country by chainsaws, burning tires, and rifles. The recent implementation of speed cameras in Australia has produced the same reaction. Surveillance cameras, however, are more prolific and more useful to police. In many cities across the world, surveillance cameras are routinely targeted with rocks, paint, and hammers. People generally use brightly colored paints to disable the cameras and draw attention to them. Cameras are only one part of the repressive web that threatens to envelop us, but are certainly a worthy target.⁷

Also, anarchists and other radicals in many countries have initiated projects that focus on immigrant detention. In Australia in 2002, there was a direct attack on the Woomera detention facility by hundreds of people who tore down several layers of security fences. This allowed several detainees to escape. In Greece in December of 2004, anarchists held a solidarity rally with Afghan immigrants who had been tortured by the police. There, the demonstrators attacked the police station where the torture had occurred. In Lecce, Italy, a very determined struggle against the Regina Pacis detention center has been developing over the last three years. Riots have broken out in the facility, and sabotage and arson attacks were undertaken against those who manage and profit from it. As long as capitalism exists, it will ravage large parts of the world, sending people on forced marches across deserts, oceans, and national borders; thus these revolutionary projects of immigrant solidarity are worthy of close study.⁸

If we hope to have any impact upon repression, we need to begin refusing their commands and disobeying their orders, and start thinking about ways we can meet face-to-face with others who are facing state repression. When the state hits us, let's hit back. After all, like the police argue, a few broken windows eventually lead to full-scale disorder.

Kellen Kass

Endnotes

1. We are still unsure about whether or not Anna Davies is the informant's real name, but for the article we will use that name for the sake of simplicity.
2. At this time, both Lauren Weiner and Zachary Jensen have taken plea deals and agreed to cooperate against Eric McDavid. For more information see: www.supporteric.org
3. State of Surveillance ACLU report, p. 13. Available online: http://www.aclunc.org/issues/government_surveillance/the_state_of_surveillance.shtml
4. Kristian Williams. *Our Enemies in Blue: Police and Power in America*, p 239
5. Williams p 237
6. Calling this strategy counter-insurgency is not in any way a hyperbole, because occupying armies in situations such as Algeria and Ireland primarily developed these strategies. While there is too much to go into here, William's *Our Enemies in Blue* is an excellent resource for gaining a deeper understanding of this phenomenon.
7. For more information about the UK speed camera attacks, see <http://www.speedcam.co.uk/>, and for the Australian case, see "Speed Cameras: The War Begins," available at: <http://sydney.indymedia.org/node/38981>
8. Also for information on anarchist activity against immigrant detention centers see "An Example of Struggle Against Deportation and Detention Centers for Immigrants" in the first issue *A Murder of Crows*.

REPRESSION AND ITS DISCONTENTS



Over the last year, there have been arrests, grand jury subpoenas, trials, jail sentences, paid and unpaid informing, plea bargains, and not-guilty pleas due to state repression. The FBI's "Operation Backfire," the SHAC 7 case, the Auburn arrests, and a number of other cases, have all been dubbed the "Green Scare."¹ The authorities have attempted to link all of these cases to alleged Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) direct actions. "Operation Backfire" is the most far-reaching—over a dozen people have been indicted and arrests have been made from coast to coast. One of those arrested, William Rodgers, took his own life in an Arizona jail two weeks after his arrest. Some have not been apprehended by the state, while others have taken plea deals selling out co-defendants. Four defendants recently took "global resolution" pleas, which do *not* involve offering information or testimony against others, in the District of Oregon; Joyanna Zacher, Nathan Block, Daniel McGowan, and Jonathan Paul were facing sentences of up to 1,115 years in prison. Briana Waters, who is facing federal charges in Washington related to a single arson and who staunchly maintains her innocence, still faces a heavy prison sentence due to "destructive device" mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines.

These cases focus on a variety of acts of sabotage that occurred in the mid-90s to early-2000s. The state has portrayed the "Backfire" defendants as part of a mythical "Family," a term which evokes images of Charles Manson, and many mainstream media outlets have been quick to use this manipulative comparison.² Not only is there now a clique to blame for previously unsolved direct actions, but, according to the government and its media lackeys, the defendants should be considered homegrown eco-terrorists. The FBI considers the ELF and ALF the number one domestic threat to homeland security. This view of the ELF and ALF as centralized or unified organizations is interesting because they have never had any formal organization—they are simply names of convenience for direct actions done on behalf of the Earth or animals. The terrorist label is a complete manipulation considering that no humans or animals have ever been injured in any ELF and ALF actions. Property has been the only thing destroyed; another lesson that, in the capitalist system, property is more valuable than life.

Before "Operation Backfire" became public, there was one only person, Jacob Ferguson, who provided the FBI with the information needed to proceed with the cases. He betrayed his former friends, under the guise of reminiscing about the past, by getting them to talk about their alleged involvement in certain actions and recorded these conversations using a hidden audio device. Immediately upon arrest, Stanislas Meyerhoff and Kevin Tubbs rebuked their old "radical" days and implicated other people by offering information and taking plea deals agreeing to further cooperation. Two unindicted individuals, Jennifer Kolar and Lacey Phillabaum, also decided to inform in exchange for plea deals in Washington federal court.³ In the case of those arrested in Auburn, California, the infiltration by FBI employee

"Anna," who helped entrap three others, is equally disturbing. Overall, the recent cases could cause total paralysis in radical circles, but instead let's try and learn from them, rather than receding into the dark, narrow halls of paranoia.

There are a couple of victories to be found in this story, however. First off, the actions investigated during "Operation Backfire" commenced in 1996 and continued through 2001. This means, almost ten years after the first action under investigation, the FBI had found their first suspects due to the help of one snitch. The FBI would not have had a case without Jacob Ferguson. In addition, there are still several people at large who are possibly out of the country. These people are not in the custody of the state, and this represents a small victory as well. Jeff Hogg, who was jailed on May 18 for refusing testify before a Eugene, Oregon grand jury linked to "Operation Backfire," was finally released from jail on November 15, almost half a year later. In addition, Josh Wolf has been jailed in the Bay Area for refusing to supply a grand jury with video footage of a protest, and two animal rights activists there also face possible jail time for resisting a different grand jury. Non-cooperation of this type is extremely important and sets a fine example of fighting against the judicial apparatus.

The Pacific Northwest has been affected by "Operation Backfire" in a number of ways: people have been harassed by the FBI, followed out of restaurants, entire households were questioned, and people were subpoenaed, arrested, and jailed. We've seen snitching, suicide, and drastic charges placed on defendants. One can only assume that repression will worsen in the future because the state doesn't generally "ease up" on people whose activities are labeled as "terrorism." Let's not forget that the SHAC 7 were put in prison simply for running a website that advocated illegal direct action. With a long history of state repression behind us, and new cases of repression constantly unraveling around us, it can be hard to remain positive and remember that we have to keep doing what we do, regardless of the consequences. And how we do it is of utmost importance.

It is necessary to differentiate between anarcho-activism and self-organization. Activism is the act of doing something for the sake of activity. This approach is tediously interwoven with ideas of "community," the "get shit done" attitude, and inevitably includes references to "the movement." I have experienced anarcho-activism as something in which people are generally, young, white, collegiate, and from the "middle" or upper classes and have tremendous amounts of guilt—male, class, race, and otherwise. Self-organization, on the other hand, is based on the idea that, as individuals, we have the ability to form relationships with each other and work on projects that forward a common vision or goal. These relationships are free of coercion and manipulation and are based on the mutual understanding that, as humans, we need these kinds of relationships to survive in this world. These relationships are freely formed, rather than formed out of guilt, martyrdom, or a sense of duty.

Another difference between self-organization and anarcho-activism is that one part of the “get shit done” attitude is the idea that revolution is always just around the corner. Insurrectionary potential is certainly always there, but a full-blown, mass-revolution of the people in the near future seems idealistic; a mistaken belief that mass change is on the horizon is like not being able to climax—it is *extremely frustrating*. While there is urgency for change, it will more than likely not look like a utopian future of the united working class fighting the state. What possibilities do we have?

Since we have time, why not work on developing stronger relationships and forming affinity with others?⁴ Affinity is based on clear understandings of who you are, what your interpersonal relationships look like, what kind of analysis you have and how it relates to others. Contrary to the idea that one can simply attend the meetings of an activist group and automatically achieve affinity with others, affinity is actually something that develops over time. Time gives us the opportunity to develop trust and deeper understandings of how each individual thinks and acts. I once had a person tell me that they would not be able to trust me or take me too seriously until I had been around for at least three years. Had this been told to me years ago, I would have dismissed the person as an asshole and probably been tempted to tell them to shove it up their ass. The point is to take time to see if someone is still going to be around. The anarchist milieu has a tendency to attract transitory people, not just in the geographic sense. There are many people who are transitioning through different identities and who leave, as the “Operation Backfire” cases have highlighted with such alarming clarity.

Trust is a big deal. Most of us have a difficult time trusting people; I know that I do. In most cases, there is good reason to be hesitant with people. Trust is necessary for clandestine activity, planning a demonstration, or publishing a website. When your activities will potentially land you in a courtroom, facing over a thousand years in prison, it may leave you wishing you’d known your co-conspirators a little better. I can’t say that with certainty, but it seems like that’s what I’d be thinking about—the fucking asshole that ran his mouth. So how can we work on developing trust with one another?

One very practical way is a reading group. Reading groups can be useful as non-exclusive groups held in public spaces or for smaller groups of friends that want to explore new ideas with one another. Reading theory, philosophy, and history offers individuals new ways to look at the situations we are all confronted with. Study groups can be really rewarding and allow one to work out ideas about the condition of the world; action with analysis is one the goals. Plus in reading groups, you get a better feeling about where people are in their ideas and where they are coming from. This is one step towards affinity.

It is also possible to develop trust and affinity through group projects. Whether it’s planning

a fundraiser or developing a workshop, group projects can be a way to meet people and develop your skills. It’s important to not make the mistake of joining a group and automatically assuming some kind of affinity exists; that’s not affinity, it’s membership. Group projects have a tendency to work best when friends work together for a common goal. While group projects seem to work well with people who already know one another, this mentality can lead to some problems of inclusion. The anarchist milieu is notorious for paranoia and the constant sneaking suspicion that all strangers are cops or snitches, and sometimes this judgment is valid. But if we can’t trust strangers, then how can we develop new relationships with people?

I would suggest that in some cases, group projects or collectives, in addition to reading groups, can be a useful way of introducing interested people to anarchist principles and theories. In these situations we can collectively develop practical and theoretical skills. The effectiveness of this strategy is uncertain, but creating these spaces is important because it makes it easier to pass on history and experiences. I hesitate to support collectives for the sake of collectives, as this tends to hedge us back to activism—the collective format is not revolutionary by itself and can lead to nightmarish situations where power dynamics are askew and often go unchecked. But they can also work well and allow for the creation of situations where people can grow, rather than suffocate.

The best-functioning groups I have been in were loosely organized groups of people with developed affinity and a common goal. In my experience, these have tended to be temporary arrangements, less than a year, with specific goals and tactics. These group activities have had a couple of things in common. Physical spaces allowed us to develop interpersonal relationships with one another based on face-to-face communication—the best kind. Projects also contributed to networking within the immediate geographic area, as well as both nationally and internationally. Networks are really important. The US is a large country and it is easy to feel isolated from one another and the world at large, making it even easier to forget that people are fighting the same institutions of systemic power globally. Group



projects allow us to observe each other's behavior, get a feel for relevant personal history, understand each other's analytical frameworks, and watch for potentially hazardous behaviors.⁵

When it comes to illegal direct action, affinity is absolutely necessary. If you are breaking the law, break it with brains. As history has shown over and over again, snitching and infiltration are serious obstacles. Choose your comrades with care. Develop a well-thought-out plan, and only work with yourself or with others that you trust. Utilize common sense and remember that you don't want to get caught. The objective is to fuck up the social order, not have the state put you in prison for life.

"Operation Backfire" and the "Green Scare" have been an unpleasant reminder that state repression is operating quite effectively, and anarchists are making the same mistakes. But instead of being doom and gloom about the situation, letting paranoia sway us into sleep, let's celebrate the positive aspects of these cases. It took almost ten years for some of the cases to be cracked; that's almost a decade of silence, and there are four people who are still unaccounted for. It is unfortunate that it took only one person snitching, followed by a number of others who decided their "lives had changed" and that it was okay to snitch on their so-called friends. However, in the successive months, many "Operation Backfire" defendants took pleas that did not compromise their fellow defendants, yet relieved themselves of facing almost 1100 years in prison.

The events of the past year have been distressing for the anarchist milieu, but should also remind us that we are people capable of accomplishing our goals. In an effort to thwart future snitching, let's work on developing affinity with one another. The long-lasting kind. While we develop our own networks, let's also remind ourselves that insurrection is always possible, and keep our eyes open for potentially revolutionary situations. Let's figure out ways to work together towards our goal of bringing civilization down, rather than destroying ourselves.

lee hunter

Endnotes

1. For information on non-cooperating defendant Eric McDavid from the Auburn arrests and the SHAC 7, see sidebar.
2. For a particularly disturbing example, see Rolling Stone, August 10, 2006. "The Rise & Fall of the Eco-Radical Underground," by Vanessa Grigoriadis.
3. <http://portland.indymedia.org/en/2006/10/346998.shtml>
4. Not time in the "infinite" sense, rather that the climate in the United States is not supportive of liberatory ideas, unless it is the liberation of the market. If we were advocating free market capitalism, our ideas might be a little catchier.
5. Some potential problems are braggarts, show-offs, mental health schisms, and substance abuse problems. Mental health and substance abuse are very common and more often than not ignored or dismissed, rather than approached as a result of living in a sick fucking society that causes a tremendous amount of pain. Not to say that we all need to jump on the pop-psychology bandwagon, but we need to make space for personal healing. Just the same, we each need to take responsibility for our actions and not try to blame our behaviors on substance abuse or being "crazy."

ANTI REPRESSION ACTIONS

November 17 Charlotte, North Carolina - One thousand mostly nonunion and Latino workers walked off their jobs at a Smithfield Foods Inc. against the firing of immigrants for allegedly providing false documents.

October 2 Memphis, Tennessee - A fire destroyed the three bedroom home and pickup truck of a person very active in the Neighborhood Watch Program, a citizen-encouraged policing program.

June 13 Grand Rapids, Michigan - A mobile police station was attacked with a molotov cocktail, burning out the floor of the office.

June 10 Phoenix, Arizona - Twenty-five people demonstrated at the local FBI office against the current wave of state repression.

April 29 Howard Lake, Minnesota - Latzig Mink Ranch was raided for the second time in ten years. Hundreds of mink were released and breeding information was destroyed. The action was claimed in solidarity with Peter Young.

Resources:

Nathan Block #1663667
Lane County Jail
101 W 5th Ave.
Eugene, OR 97401

Joyanna Zacher #1662550
Lane County Jail
101 W 5th Ave
Eugene, OR 97401

Support group for Nathan and Joyanna:
supportersofnathanandjoyanna@gmail.com

Daniel McGowan (Out on Bail)
www.supportdaniel.org

Jonathan Paul (Out on Bail)
friendsofjonathanpaul@yahoo.com

Briana Waters
www.supportbriana.org

Eric McDavid
www.supporteric.org

The "SHAC 7"
www.shac7.com

The National Lawyers Guild has established a hotline, 888-NLG-ECOLAW, for individuals arrested or subpoenaed for offenses related to environmental or animal activism.

More Online Resources:

Green Scare: greenscare.org
Earth Liberation Prisoners Support: ecoprisoners.org
Civil Liberties Defense Center: cldc.org

THIS IS WHAT RECUPERATION LOOKS LIKE: THE REBELLION IN OAXACA AND THE APPO



On May 22, 2006, teachers in the state of Oaxaca, Section 22 of the National Education Worker's Union (SNTE), went on strike. Section 22 has yearly strikes in Oaxaca to demand a variety of concessions from the state, and this year's strike included calls for higher wages, the construction of more schools throughout the state of Oaxaca, as well as free lunches and supplies for students. Section 22 members occupied the city center, the Zócalo, to further their protest and disrupt the state capital during the beginning of the tourist season. They set up camping sites in the main square, occupied public buildings and organized large marches, or mega-marches as the Oaxacans call them, to reinforce their economic demands as well as to call for the resignation of Governor Ulises Ruiz. Public support was quite strong for the marches as well as the occupation.

In early June, teachers were given a final offer and ultimatum to vacate the Zócalo. On June 14, a police raid authorized by Gov. Ruiz involving nearly 3,000 officers from the state police attacked the central square in the early morning hours. A helicopter dropped tear gas into the square to disorient the occupiers, while outside of the city riot police readied themselves for an invasion. Police attacked the main square, completely destroying the teachers' encampments and injuring hundreds. Teachers and Oaxaca residents fought back against police aggression and were able to retake the square in a matter of hours with their fists and makeshift weapons. During the fighting, however, 8 people died and others were "disappeared."¹

After people reoccupied the Zócalo and took control of surrounding blocks, a mega-march was held on June 16, with an estimated 400,000 people taking part. This time however, the teachers dropped their economic demands in exchange for one political demand: the removal of Gov. Ruiz. Despite the narrowed focus, the struggle was extended in a variety of ways; teachers occupied seven city hall buildings across the state, and students at the Benito Juárez Autonomous University of Oaxaca (UABJO) took over their school radio station in support of the striking teachers.² In addition to these actions, teachers and many on the left formed the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO). The APPO was an ad

hoc organization for people to come together to talk about the events transpiring and to plan future action.

July was contentious as well because the Mexican presidential elections took place at the beginning of the month. Much like Ruiz's election, the presidential election was fraught with allegations of fraud. Throughout the recount, groups in Oaxaca managed to not be drawn into any particular party's machinations.

On August 1, a women's march involving some 2,000 people made its way through Oaxaca to the city center. From there a few hundred women took their protest out of the streets and into the building of TV Channel 9. They occupied the building and took over the station, broadcasting themselves and their views on the current situation; video footage of the various marches and police raids was also shown.³ By August 22, Ruiz and his cohorts had had enough, and they launched a paramilitary attack against the station. In response, people took to the streets, overturning several city buses, setting them on fire, and using them to block major roads. In addition, demonstrators took over private radio stations to spread news of the raid and to announce solidarity messages. At the same time various smaller groups armed with clubs shut down intersections across the already paralyzed city.⁴

Paramilitary violence has been a serious problem throughout the teachers' strike and occupation of the city. The term paramilitaries is awfully vague, and it has been extremely difficult to find out who has been behind some of the shootings; those captured are seldom identified by the state. Certainly the paramilitaries involve Mexican military, Oaxacan police, as well as the private army of Ruiz who is, at the time of this writing, still desperately clinging to power. At a march on August 10, gunmen opened fire killing one teacher, Jose Jimenez.⁵ On October 18, a teacher and APPO participant, Pánfilo Hernández, was shot and killed in a paramilitary drive-by. On October 27, Brad Will, anarchist and Indymedia journalist, was shot and killed by paramilitaries, as were Emilio Alonso Fabián and Esteban López Zurita. These are some of the most well documented cases, but there are dozens of others who have died in this fight as well.

Events in October were tumultuous, and the month came to a crashing conclusion. On October 26, Section 22 teachers voted to end their strike amidst allegations of voting fraud and accusations that their leadership had sold out. And on October 28, Vicente Fox announced that he was ordering thousands of Federal Preventative Police (PFP) into Oaxaca in order to retake the city. When the PFP invasion came, the APPO urged peaceful protest and non-violent resistance to the police. Lines of riot police equipped with tear gas and batons pushed back thousands of people, and they also used armored trucks with water cannons and plows to disperse people and destroy barricades. The APPO sent out numerous communiqués exhorting people to act peacefully, and even went so far as to denounce all violent actions against the PFP as the work of agent provocateurs.⁶ People laid down in the roads, pushed against police lines, but by nightfall the PFP had made its way into the city center.

As police pushed further into the city on November 2, they attempted to retake the university and destroy the occupied radio station within it. In a six-hour battle with police, students and many other people used molotov cocktails, rocks, steel pipes, and slings to fight police, and they overturned cars and buses to further reinforce their blockades. This fierce resistance forced the police to withdraw and put a stop to police advances into the university area. Students and many others were clearly upset about the loss of the Zócalo to state forces. Therefore they decided to use violent means to continue occupying the university regardless of what the APPO said. At the time of this writing, the students and the APPO still control the area surrounding the university.

Roots of Rebellion

The rich will do anything for the poor but get off their backs.
—Karl Marx

The uprising in Oaxaca and the popular mobilizations have made international headlines recently, but the causes of the situation have not garnered as much attention. In August 2004, Ulises Ruiz Ortiz, a lawyer, “won” the Oaxaca governor’s election by a slim margin. Ruiz’s opponents immediately contested the election results, charging that he and his cohorts had rigged the outcome. Apparently the opposition’s claims were not unfounded, but Ruiz still took office in December later that year. Ruiz is a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) that completely controlled the Mexican federal government for over 70 years until the 2000 election of Vicente Fox, a National Action Party (PAN) member, to the presidency.⁷

Considering the extreme poverty in Mexico, with some 40 million living well below the poverty line, it is not surprising that one of the main ways that the PRI remained in power was through a system of patronage: contracts, jobs, and funding for education and basic services are handed out after successful elections of PRI officials on the local and national level.⁸ In thousands of other cases, and specifically in Ruiz’s case, bags of groceries were handed out in exchange for votes. In Oaxaca though, it was not just Ruiz who came to power in this way. In the first few months of 2006 there were also conflicts over town elections in San Blas Atempa, Oaxaca between the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) candidate and a PRI candidate over issues of voter fraud and purchasing of votes. While this may seem outrageous, patronage has been a normal procedure in politics worldwide for centuries, and the PRI is just a standard political machine that many throughout Mexico are finally fed up with. Unfortunately, many people think that these corrupt politicians should simply be replaced by honest politicians.⁹

The roots of the problem, however, go much deeper than PRI patronage and corruption that permeate Mexican politics. The cause of the mobilization and violent clashes with police lies in the absolutely wretched economic conditions that dominate life across southern Mexico. Oaxaca, bordering Chiapas to the west, is Mexico’s second-poorest state and has the second-largest population of indigenous peoples. According to human rights organizations, nearly 80% of Oaxaca lives in extreme poverty.¹⁰ The main industry that props up the economy of Oaxaca is tourism. And like all tourist areas, most people work in services where wages are low, and many public services are geared towards visitors as opposed to actual residents.

International trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) have only made things worse. The implementation of neo-liberal reforms to the Mexican state, which has meant an overall cut to basic necessities over the past several years, has made it even more difficult for people to survive.¹¹ In recent years, Mexico has been unable to keep pace with China’s offer to the altar of economic sacrifice: its immense, expendable and therefore cheap work force. Thus Mexico has been subject to the migration of factories and jobs to Asia in the same way that the United States has experienced “job loss” to Mexico. Thus it is not hard to see that the dictates of the market care little about countries, and that capital flows in the direction of greater profit and greater misery.¹² It is this complex situation that has led to decades of social conflict and has culminated in the struggle we see now.

We’re All on the Same Team: the APPO

Our aim is a more democratic government that listens to the people more than the current government does.

—APPO Spokesman Florentino Lopez Martinez

While many inspiring actions are taking place in Oaxaca, one must not lose the ability to look critically at the situation. On the surface the APPO appears to be simply an assembly of common people charting out their future, but there are very distinct political perspectives and groups involved. The membership of the APPO is extremely varied and is composed of a variety of social organizations, political groupings, unions, and human rights organizations. Members of Section 22 are involved, as are anarchists, municipal authorities, and indigenous organizations such as the Movimiento de Unificación y Lucha Triqui (MULT) and the Popular Indigenous Council of Oaxaca – Ricardo Flores Magon (CIPO-RFM). Within the APPO, representatives from each group participate in meetings where issues are decided based on consensus as opposed to majority rule. Members are not supposed to be involved in parties participating in electoral politics, but membership is open to groups such as the Revolutionary Popular Front (FPR) and the Union of Revolutionary Youth of Mexico (UJRM), both of which are openly appendages of the Marxist-Leninist Mexican Communist Party. One of the spokesmen for the APPO, Florentino Lopez Martinez, has stated in interviews that he is a member of the FPR.¹³

Aside from small aspiring states such as the Marxist-Leninist Mexican Communist Party, there are other politicians in the midst of the APPO. One of the spokespeople of the APPO, the media-darling and crass opportunist Flavio Sosa, was a part of Vicente Fox’s election campaign in 2000 through his organization the New Left of Oaxaca. Sosa has also been actively involved in the PRI splinter-party the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) for years, a party he actually quit in order to be involved in the APPO.¹⁴ It should be pretty obvious that Sosa is a political opportunist who moves from one group to the next in hopes of

carving out some kind of position for himself. He's a classic recuperator, and one in serious need of an ass kicking.

It is also interesting to note that APPO member and Section 22 leader, Enrique Rueda Pacheco, gave a speech at the fifth mega-march in Oaxaca in early September calling for "national unity" and a movement that would incorporate the PRD and the Zapatistas. He has also been involved in trying to end the teachers' strike as far back as July. Like a typical union hack, he has consistently tried to undermine the strike in exchange for political clout. Clearly, the APPO is a mixed bag and includes its fair share of aspiring politicians and real politicians. This, however, is not the most damning aspect.¹⁵

At the end of September, three days of meetings were held to discuss the transformation of the APPO from an ad hoc organization to a more formalized and permanent organization in Oaxaca. Following the meetings, a document entitled "Resolutions of the First State Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca" was released. This document is perhaps the best indication of the nature of the APPO because it is an attempt to define "...Statutes, the Declaration of Principles, a definitive Structure and a Program of Struggle." Within the resolutions there is a section entitled "Proposal for a Program of Struggle," which is most revealing of the overall aims of the APPO.

The first point of the program of struggle is entitled "For the Defense of National Sovereignty," in which they outline their proposal for withdrawing the Mexican state from trade agreements such as NAFTA and the FTAA, as well as from organizations such as the IMF and World Bank. Their second point, entitled "For a New Model of Economic Development" reaffirms national ownership of natural resources and calls for the re-nationalization of industries that have been privatized, as well as the nationalization of monopolistic industries such as banking. Thus the APPO identifies neo-liberal institutions like the IMF and World Bank and privately owned corporations as "bad" and the sovereign Mexican state as "good." A later portion of the economic program even calls for further economic integration of Latin America and the Caribbean and the creation of a common market therein, a sort of alternative FTAA. According to the APPO, the problem is not with the market, not with capitalism, not with the existence of bureaucratic institutions, but rather with US imperialism and the bad countries of the North that take advantage of the good countries in the South. It's the same tired charade of national liberation that has proven time and time again to be a miserable dead end.

The third point of their program of struggle is "For a Popular Democracy," in which they proclaim that the "present antidemocratic State should be replaced with a new State with a democratic and popular character..." which in turn will be



based on "...the will of the Mexican people to constitute and make effective a Democratic and Representative Federal Republic." This points asserts that the state is a neutral institution and that everything would be better for all of us if only the corrupt, lying politicians were replaced by honest, democratic politicians. Perhaps their critique of the state is so liberal because many representatives in the APPO would like to see themselves as the next ruling elite, but that remains to be seen. Thus their program of struggle is not proposing the revolutionary transformation of social life, but rather the democratization of the state and the continuance of capitalism, albeit with a friendlier face.¹⁶

Given the participation of many dubious groups and characters, as well as the "Resolutions of the First State Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca," we must conclude that the character of the APPO is reformist, and their overall plan is one of recuperating the rage and resentment of the dispossessed in order to manage the misery of the current social order. The APPO does not seek to destroy the state, but it intends to democratize it. The APPO does not seek to end capitalism, but it intends to increase state ownership of corporations and make capitalism fairer. Plainly stated, the APPO – an organization with defined principles and a long term strategy of struggle— does not share common goals with anarchists, and is certainly taking part in activity that will actively undermine the overthrow of this system. They promote false alternatives and question only the management of the state and capitalism, not the system itself.

Solidarity?

Prepare to die...Put down your shields and take off your helmets, and I'll beat the living shit out of you!
—anonymous Oaxacan woman defending the UABJO

This brings us full circle then to the issue of solidarity. Clearly the APPO is an organization with wide support from those who want to see major change come about in their lives; this cannot be denied. But their popularity does not erase the fact that there are micro-bureaucrats actively involved in the APPO, nor does it change the fact that the APPO's program is one of promoting a new way to manage the state and capitalism. Also despite its name, the APPO does not represent everyone involved, or the revolt in its entirety. The uprising in Oaxaca has been inspiring because of people's willingness to take their lives into their own hands and direct their own activity. This is the greatest potential of the rebellion: its ability to break with the normality of being controlled and directed by others and then spread further, eventually leading to revolutionary social transformation.

People are beginning to rediscover the ability to meet face-to-face in occupied zones – the Zócalo, the university, the neighborhoods and streets— in order to discuss matters of real importance. Direct actions such as strikes, occupations, blockades, and sabotage are being employed by all of those involved. Women are asserting themselves even more, planning actions, taking over television stations, organizing blockades, and participating in street fighting against the police. The cessation of "business as usual" and the casting off of subservience has opened up many possibilities and has led to massive resistance to the Mexican state. This growing self-organization must remain truly autonomous if it is not to be slowly ground down by piecemeal reforms and other political tricks. Therefore the APPO and its alternative management plan must be rejected.¹⁷

Despite the deficiencies of the APPO, we should extend solidarity to the people fighting in Oaxaca. In the United States many solidarity actions were undertaken during the PFP raids in late October and early November. Protests were held outside of embassies and consulates in many cities across the US, including Houston, Phoenix, and Seattle. Consulates in Sacramento and Minneapolis had their windows smashed, and other consulates and embassies were blockaded or occupied like in New York, Indianapolis, and Raleigh. Anarchists in the US have been very active in concretely demonstrating their solidarity with the events in Oaxaca, and one can only hope that these actions will spread.

The course of the conflict is being played out as we write. The Zapatistas have called for a general strike in Mexico on November 20, and scores of actions are planned in the US and abroad for that day as well. Consulates and embassies are clearly targets of interest, but one should not forget that we are fighting an entire system, and that demonstrating solidarity with Oaxaca can take many forms such as shut downs of corporations with financial links in Mexico as a whole, blockades in our own cities, and of course the escalation of activity against more direct issues in the US. People in Oaxaca are taking steps to combat this system as a whole, let's do the same.

Kellen Kass

Addendum: This piece was written in November 2006 as an analytical contribution to attempts to express solidarity with the revolt in Oaxaca. We hope we were successful towards that end. Social conflict is on the rise in Mexico, and anarchists in the US should begin establishing greater contact with comrades there so that we can begin to effectively interweave our projects of revolt. We'd also like to call attention to another essay, "Direct Solidarity With the Oppressed and Exploited in Oaxaca," by the Coordinadora Insurreccional Anarquista of Mexico City. Their essay is available on our web site and complements the article above quite well.

Endnotes

1. "Oaxaca Teachers Union Protests face Police Repression," available at: <http://www.chiapaspeacehouse.org/node/286>, and "Up From Below: The New Revolution in Southern Mexico," available at: <http://www.counterpunch.org/ross07142006.html>
2. "In Oaxaca Mega-March, 400,000 Send A Firm No to the Repression by Governor Ulises Ruiz Ortiz," available at: <http://www.narconews.com/Issue41/article1906.html>
3. "Oaxaca's State TV Station Under Popular Control," available at: <http://www.narconews.com/Issue42/article1990.html>
4. "Mexico Teachers Extend Protest," available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5272462.stm>
5. "Violence Flares in South Mexico," available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4782837.stm>
6. For the APPO's denunciation of violence, see <http://codepappo.wordpress.com/2006/10/29/urgente-la-pfp-en-oaxaca>
7. "Under the Volcano," *The Economist*, September 28, 2006.
8. "Oaxaca's Dangerous Teachers," *Dollars & Sense: the Magazine of Economic Justice*, September/October 2006.
9. "Police Retake Oaxaca Town Hall Occupied Since January 2005," available at: <http://www.narconews.com/Issue40/article1654.html>
10. "How Many Deaths Is the Oaxaca Governor Worth?" available at: <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines06/1103-08.htm>
11. "Oaxaca's Dangerous Teachers," *Dollars & Sense: the Magazine of Economic Justice*, September/October 2006.
12. For more information about the economic background of Mexico, see "A Commune in Chiapas? Mexico and the Zapatista Rebellion," *Aufheben* #9, Autumn 2000.
13. Frente Popular Revolucionario: <http://fprweb.tripod.com/index.htm>, and Unión de la Juventud Revolucionaria de México: <http://pagina.de/uirm>. For interview with Florentino Lopez Martinez see: <http://www.infoshop.org/inews/article.php?story=20061022084418717>.
14. "Liderazgo "camaleónico": Flavio Sosa, cabeza de la APPO, apoyó al PRD, luego a Fox," *Diario de la Yucatán*, Nov. 6 2006.
15. "Oaxaca's Social Movement Develops Radical Vision for a National Government of the People" available at: <http://www.narconews.com/Issue42/article2038.html>.
16. Resolutions of the First State Assembly of the People's of Oaxaca are available online at: <http://www.asambleapopulardeaoaxaca.com/boletines/index.php?s=R> ESOLUTIVOS+DE+LA+PRIMERA+ASAMBLEA+ESTATAL+DE+LOS+PUEBLOS+DE+OAXACA+
17. For a look at one neighborhood's activities which are outside of the APPO, see "Two Days in the Life of Oaxaca's Revolution," available at: <http://narconews.com/Issue42/article2021.html>

US SOLIDARITY ACTIONS

November 27 Phoenix, Arizona- Eight to ten plate glass windows were smashed at the Mexican consulate, and the words "Para Oaxaca" were painted on a wall.

November 20 Boston, Massachusetts- In the morning a banner in support of the struggle in Oaxaca was hung over the Massachusetts Turnpike, and the filming of Fox News was disrupted. In the afternoon, demonstrators held the streets of downtown for nearly two hours with a march and roving blockade. They then marched on the Mexican consulate, forming a massive picket line. Multiple windows of the consulate were also hit with red paint.

November 20 San Francisco, California- About 150 protesters marched during rush hour traffic, blocking the entrances to the Oakland Bay Bridge. Mock body bags were piled in front of the Mexican consulate as red paint was splattered on the doors. Two banners were hung at the entrance to the freeway, and demonstrators locked the doors to the Mexican consulate.

November 20 Greensboro, North Carolina- Affinity groups set up coordinated street blockades to greet downtown's morning rush hour traffic. Streets were blocked with cable wiring, cones, orange tape, railroad ties, and a number of banner drops. One forty-foot banner read, "Long Live the Oaxaca Rebellion." Later people gathered downtown to disseminate information about the rebellion and the Mexican government's repression. That evening there was a movie showing and public discussion focusing on events in Chiapas, Atenco, and Oaxaca.

November 20 Tucson, Arizona- Direct action was taken against the National Law Center for Inter-American Free Trade in Tucson, AZ. Windows were smashed, locks were glued, and messages were painted on the building reading "Viva Oaxaca" and "Free Trade = Death."

November 2 Lawrence, Kansas- Between 15 and 20 people used a nearly 40 foot long banner reading "Justice for the People of Oaxaca; Governor Ruiz and Troops Out" to blockade the road across the street from the local corporate news source the *Lawrence Journal World's* offices.

THE HARVEST OF DEAD ELEPHANTS: THE FALSE OPPOSITION OF ANIMAL LIBERATION



I never met anybody who said when they were a kid, 'I wanna grow up and be a critic.'

—Richard Pryor

We believe there are some who take action under animal liberation's very broad banner that are just as concerned as we are with completely transforming this society based on exploitation and misery. However, we find many within radical and anarchist circles *acritically* embracing animal liberation philosophy and veganism. These ideas have maintained an inertia and perpetuance that have unfortunately met little challenge, especially in North America. We hope this critique will provide some starting points toward greater critical thought and theoretical reflection, tools that will be required of us if we are to take effective action against domination and exploitation.

Animal Liberation: A Brief Overview

The animal liberation movement developed and radicalized in the 1970s in Britain, and to a lesser extent, in the US. Its philosophy grew out of, and often overlaps with, animal rights, which claims that all animals are entitled to possess their own lives, should possess moral rights, and that some rights for animals ought to be put into law, such as the right to not be confined, harmed, or killed.

Peter Singer is one of the ideological founders of the animal liberation movement. His approach to an animal's moral status is not based on the concept of rights, but on the utilitarian principle of equal consideration of interests. In his book *Animal Liberation* (1975), he argues that humans should grant moral consideration to other animals not based on intelligence, their ability to moralize, or on any other human attribute, but rather on their ability to experience *suffering*. The animal liberation ideology maintains that humans can make moral choices that animals cannot, and therefore humans must choose to avoid causing suffering.

Since animal rights and animal liberation's philosophical beginnings, many animal liberation groups have sprung up worldwide, each with differing approaches but all working for the same fundamental goal. Likewise, veganism, the lifestyle of not consuming or using any animal products, nor products tested on animals, has become ever more popular. My intention is not to be comprehensive here. Anyone interested in learning the particulars of the animal liberation movement can find an abundance of books and websites with more information.¹

Manipulations, Representations, and Abstractions

Animal liberation is...a war. A long, hard, bloody war in which all the countless millions of its victims have been on one side only, have been defenseless and innocent, whose one tragedy was to be born nonhuman.

—Robin Webb, British ALF Press Officer

...the most abstract of the senses, and the most easily deceived...

—Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*

To begin a critique of anything, we must understand how its advocates represent it. The animal liberation movement first and foremost appeals to various acritically-embraced clichés that are abundant within activist movements, as well as throughout society in general. Concepts of niceness, compassion, and philanthropy, all socialized into us as being civil, responsible, and good, are played upon in the language of the animal liberationist. Animal liberation presents itself as a moral and civil progression of human society, a process of "widening our circle of compassion."² We are told that humans can and should avoid causing pain and suffering for animals, and that by doing so, humanity will be on the right path to a kinder and more peaceful world.

This focus on suffering and the supposed necessity of its elimination is highly problematic. Under capitalism, animals are used as commodities — as objects whose sole purpose is to be bought and sold — and as objects that are counted, commercialized, and price-

tagged. However, animal liberationists reduce all of these things to one broad categorization: suffering. This reduction eliminates the intricacies and specifics of how animals are used within the current social context and flattens the nature of their exploitation. What is paramount to animal liberationists is the amount of pain caused to animals and the number of animals killed. This generally leads to ridiculous oversimplifications about anyone or anything that kills animals. Hunters are bad because they kill animals, just like factory farms, and just like abusive pet owners; to animal liberationists it's only a matter of scale. Their focus is simply on ending suffering— a complete absurdity in itself.

Let's make no mistake, animals feel pain, and anyone who argues the opposite is a fool. But just the same, anyone who argues that pain and suffering can be ended is equally as foolish. Pain is an inseparable part of life. Animals can starve to death in the wild, break their bones, or be torn from limb to limb by other animals. Pain, then, is a biological indicator of danger, injury, and disease. It happens to animals without any human influence. Still, animal liberations represent animal pain and death as consequences of the supposed human moral backwater in which animals have always been used and dominated because we have not given them equal consideration; we have not progressed. So animal liberationists embrace a contradictory and dangerous proposition that pain and suffering, at least for animals, can be ended, either entirely or as it is caused by human agency. Yet the idea of ending suffering is as silly as if one wanted to end sadness and went around trying to make people laugh. It would be an exercise in futility. We are intimately connected in a cycle of life and death that, by necessity, involves pain and suffering, just as it involves sadness and joy.

Yet they tell us if only we do not turn a blind eye, we would be convinced of their cause. Horrifying images of blood and death in factory farms and brutalization in vivisection labs are abundant in animal liberation propaganda. These images, like the ones we are shocked with by the news media, are used to represent and exploit misery. While the media shocks and normalizes us to images of global misery, the animal liberation movement represents misery in order to manipulate and guilt us into wholly

embracing their perspective. It is not uncommon to hear animal liberationists compare animal exploitation to the holocaust, while also implying that what animals go through is actually far worse than anything humans experience. This analogy plays on our sympathies while quantifying the suffering of animals and attempting to convince us with the sheer weight of numbers. Pain and death are abstracted and measured, represented in a way that serves ideological promotion. If we do not care about the millions of animals that die every year, then we are cruel and uncaring. If we do not care, then we are *responsible*.

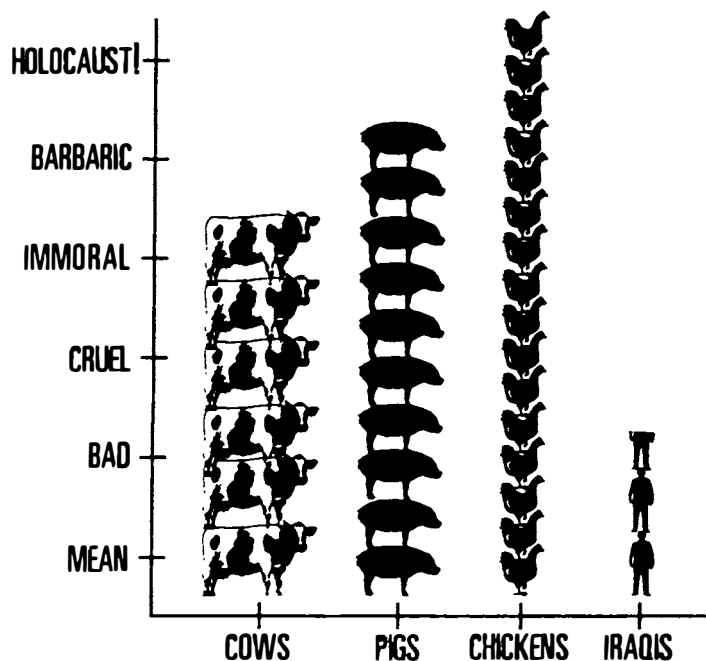
Animal liberation does not provide us with any critical assessment of social domination. It promises liberation while actually confining most everything to the quantified logic found throughout society. The abstracted language and manipulative imagery of the animal liberation movement is indicative of its wider logic, and ultimately, of one of its major weaknesses. Measuring the misery of the slaughterhouse or the vivisection lab is an appeal based on a certain number of capitalist horrors. The horrors inflicted on animals are elevated over any others by continually pointing to body counts and units of measured suffering. Yet misery and exploitation *cannot* be measured; they are not made worse by how often or how many experience it. We relate to it concretely because we experience it everyday, and we see it experienced throughout the world.

Few of us would react indifferently to the carnage of the slaughterhouse floor. Our society treats animals as it does humans or trees or genes. All are treated as units of economic value, processed as efficiently as possible and then turned into marketable commodities. But our disgust does not come from any fantasy about the end of suffering. We seek the revolutionary destruction of this society of exploitation. We hate the degradation and misery of everything being turned into objects for sale, valued according to the capitalist dictates of the modern world. We want to decide our own lives and relations, outside of the market. It is from this perspective that we analyze exploitation and enslavement as a condition of social domination—a condition that *can* be transformed. It is also from this perspective that we critique animal liberation and its dubious promises.

This, That, and the Same: The Contradictions of Cruelty-Free Consumerism

Welcome, shoppers! Thank you for being a caring consumer! By purchasing only cruelty-free products, you can help save rabbits, mice, guinea pigs, rats, and other animals.

—from PETA's Caring Consumer website



The animal liberation movement seeks to reform current social conditions, in part, by promoting "cruelty-free" and "compassionate" consumerism. By advocating this type of economic consumption, they claim that animal suffering will be reduced. The logic goes that not using or consuming an animal means that no animal will be harmed or killed. This idea of consumer reform is based on the belief that the system is faulty, unnecessarily cruel, and merely needs to be fixed. This movement is evidently not opposed to capitalism itself, regardless of what some may claim. The reality, however, is that misery is an inevitable consequence of capitalist consumption and production. Everything we buy is an object and commodity—quantified, reduced, and valued solely in terms of its role in the economy. Misery is just another by-product, like pollution, that has no economic value and thus is dispensed freely.

The cult of veganism is effective in encapsulating the false reasoning of consumer reform. The contradictions of the vegan ethic become painfully apparent when we look at the origins of all products and commodities in our society. A pound of tofu or a bottle of cruelty-free shampoo hides behind the superficiality of its claim. The claim that vegan products have not contributed directly to the killing of animals is one of many marketed illusions promoted by companies profiting off this niche market. Capitalist production, driven by mass consumption, requires an enormous quantity of resources. These resources are extracted from the earth through the cheapest and most destructive processes possible, contributing to massive amounts of animal habitat destruction and animal killing. The brutal reality of production is buried beneath the glitter of the marketplace.

Simply look at how production works. The manufacture of plastics is based on oil, so the packaging used for vegan products entails the usual pollution and "accidents" of the oil industry. Industrial oil spills in the ocean account for an estimated average 100 million gallons a year.³ Only an estimated 5% of this is from large tanker spills such as the infamous Exxon Valdez disaster.⁴ The other larger portion is comprised of routine spillage from the *normal* operations of oil transportation and extraction. Oil spills damage bird-nesting sites, coat beach habitats in sludge, and poison and directly kill fish, birds, and other marine life. Pipeline construction destroys wildlife

forests cleared for packaging materials, chemical pollution from the manufacture of inks, adhesives and lubricants, and so on and so forth. All these industrial processes poison animals and destroy their habitats. The capitalist economy will do nothing to avoid this massive destruction because these precautions would increase the cost of production and decrease profit. This is to say nothing of the fact that capitalist consumption is dependent upon an unrestrained acceleration of resource consumption and ecological destruction to feed its growth. Capitalism must expand or die. Through its expansion, the world must die.

Veganism presents a *false* alternative to capitalist misery. It doesn't and won't ever change things for the animals or for us human beings. Capitalism defines the condition of our suffering and dictates how we will live, and ultimately how we cannot. The production processes that go into making vegan products are the same as those used for any products on the market today. Mass production is part of a global division of labor that exploits millions and millions of people worldwide. Resources don't turn into commodities by themselves. People produce them. They are exploited in order to power the economy, to turn its gears and make it function. It's no surprise then that capitalists treat both animals and humans as dispensable objects. Yet the animal liberation movement would argue for the destruction or abolition of factory farms and butcher shops but put animal-



habitat. Oil refineries spew pollution into waterways, poisoning animals and destroying their breeding sites. This says nothing of the resource wars for oil that have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives, and continue to, in Afghanistan, Iraq and Africa, as well as destroyed the ecological integrity of those regions.

The fact is, organic soybeans used for tofu, tempeh, and fake meats, just like *any other product* in the store, use the same industrial distribution system that consumes enormous amounts of oil and other resources to package, store, transport, and distribute food and non-food commodities the world over.⁵ This translates into mountainsides and rivers destroyed from mining fossil fuels,

free workhouses in their place. This ignores the human suffering that wage work causes by destroying bodies and dulling minds. We humans may not be raised and killed for food production like other animals, but we are definitely raised and killed for production just the same. The morning commute, debt and rent, the fatigue, the boredom and the dissatisfaction—all these will still exist in society that sells only vegan products. There is no cruelty-free capitalism, just capital for capitalists. The economy runs the show, taking what it needs and destroying the rest.

To counter capitalist misery we must counter it as a *whole* and reject the illusion of piecemeal half-measures and consumer-

reform campaigns. More importantly, a coherent analysis of social domination requires an unflinching critique of the moral and ideological forces that seek to prevent this very analysis.

Damned if You Do: Morality's Mind-Hold Trap

His Holiness is pleased at being called upon... to eradicate from the hearts of men barbarous and cruel tendencies.

-Pope Pius X

Morality is herd instinct in the individual.

-Friedrich Nietzsche

Morality is a system of rules, a set of rigid codes based on an "objective" right and wrong, which in turn are based on conceptions of good and evil. These codes supposedly apply in all places and at all times. That which is considered "right" or "wrong" under a moral code is not simply the correct or incorrect action for one person in a specific time, place, or culture, but is rather the correct or incorrect action for all people in all places, at all times. Moralists claim that their strictures are universal standards by which their actions and the actions of others should be judged. Thus morals themselves are authoritarian because we must conform to them *regardless* of our own will.

Morals come from some authority above us. This authority could be god, the state, the family, or various reified ideas or entities that validate the supposed objectiveness of a particular morality. Moral codes define and direct the choices one makes. They must not be violated because they are absolute and inflexible. In this way, decisions are not based upon what one feels is appropriate to one's situation or desires in the world, but rather one's decisions are predetermined by a moral system. While many moralists occasionally break out of their shackles, there is a sense of shame and guilt because they have broken rules they believe are righteous and good. Thus morality is antithetical to anyone seeking to think and interact in the world in ways that reflect his or her desires.

Likewise, moral arguments are not based upon critical theoretical thinking. Moral arguments or claims can simply be refuted by opposing moral claims. If eating animals is wrong to a vegetarian, to a meat eater it is not. Assertions of right and wrong can go on and on until one's mouth is tired and tongue is dry. However, morality is relative to the culture from which it evolves.⁴ Notions of right and wrong are determined by society, and particularly by those who control society. Anyone who says that tribal hunter-gatherers are murderers because they eat meat is merely entrenched in their own arrogant moral judgments. It is precisely this lack of critical thought that places barriers between recognition of common interests among people.

Some animal liberationists, full of righteous indignation, will tell someone who eats meat how evil their food is. These indifferent or apathetic meat eaters must be told that they participate in the murder of innocent beings. If they do not listen, they are guilty. If they listen but do not act, they are guiltier still. The black and white shadows of morality cast themselves down like a judge's gavel. Campaigns to "educate" people about animal cruelty or veganism are carried out like missionary projects. Pious condemnations of other people's failures to commit to "ending suffering" are much like the preacher on his pulpit, chastising those who have yet to rid themselves of their sins. This guilt just makes people feel like shit for their already powerless position in society, limited by the choices that capitalism imposes upon us. It does not foster a critical assessment of the social conditions that

contribute to animal exploitation, but rather encourages blind obedience to predetermined rights and wrongs.

Various social institutions – religion, school, work, and the family— impart moral obedience in us in order to regulate our actions and thoughts internally and reinforce various institutions of social domination. Morality is the cop in our heads, a shackle on individual and collective realization, and an impediment to anyone who wishes to *freely* determine her or his life. When we begin to decide for ourselves what we want and how we will live, and allow others to do so as well, we'll make great strides in freeing ourselves from prisons unseen.

Ideology, Reliable Shackles

Because ideology is always the form taken by alienation. in the realm of thought, the more alienated we are, the less we understand our real situations... And the less we assert our own autonomous existence, the more palpable an existence is taken on by capitalism, by the frozen images of our roles in all the various social hierarchies and transactions of commodity exchange.

-Lev Chernyi, "An Introduction to Critical Theory"

Ideology works similarly to morality. Rather than adhering to the rules of objective truths, of right and wrong, one adopts the rigid programs and perspectives inherent or implied in an idea or concept. There is no room for any flexibility. Ideology encompasses an aspect of life entirely and governs our relation to it. In this way, ideological thinking is used in place of critical thinking. The world, or aspects of the world, are explained and understood through the filter of ideology. For example, democratic ideology upholds the idea of social change through voting, political representation, and legislation. It promotes faith in formal politics as much as it prevents autonomous direct action. The power of this ideology, like all ideology, lies in how it conforms and directs one's thinking into limited possibilities and perspectives. Ideology stands counter to a critical theoretical analysis that can assess situations and ideas based upon their actual usefulness to our practice and approach.⁷

Animal liberation does not fall outside of this; it is ideological at its foundation. It subsumes everything *under* animal issues. The exploitation of people and the destruction of the environment may still be important to the animal activist but they are seen as separate *issues*. Ideology makes one incapable of seeing or understanding things outside of it in any coherent way. Everything is framed by how it relates to an animal issue. A vivisection lab is merely a place of animal torture, neglecting the harm of pharmaceutical tests on humans, the millions made in profits, and the unquestioned advance of technology. A meat packer slices animals into pieces all day. We hate what is done to the animals as they bleed in lines, in rows, on hooks. But animal liberation ideology does not allow for the same consideration of the human worker who must endure the dangers and injuries of this tofu plant or that soymilk factory. Their degradation as replaceable cogs within the system of production is not viewed as deserving of equal consideration since animal and human are seen as separate categories, the former placed *above* the latter.

Veganism clearly demonstrates the all-encompassing power of ideology. Some vegans care little about how well they eat as long as they never consume any animal products. So eating like shit (e.g. highly-processed, chemical-laden, vegan junk food) and destroying one's body is acceptable as long as it's vegan. It's okay to destroy your health because it does not destroy an animal's— an illusion in its own right. So everything becomes an issue of the

animals' interests, blocking out all other factors. The absoluteness of maintaining a vegan lifestyle takes priority over all other concerns and maintains the illusion that vegan consumption does not contribute to animal suffering. It blinds people to the reality of what they consume, allowing one to comfortably embrace its premises *without* critically evaluating them.

Animal liberation and veganism must be framed in a social context in order for us to understand them in scale and scope. Animal liberation ideology and the vegan lifestyle that springs from it are fragmentary oppositions that *fully* adopt the capitalist system's way of conceptualizing change. They embrace the idea that one's consumer choices are primary in not only determining one's identity, but also as a way of creating change. The promises of "cruelty-free" veganism promote an abstracted view of social change focused on "saving" numbers of animals through consumerism. This false opposition challenges one aspect of domination while doing nothing to destroy its systematic causes, in this case, the rule of capitalism.

Some vegans argue that their lifestyle choices are better than nothing, in the same way some argue that Democrats are better than Republicans. This is part of veganism's fragmentary understanding of the social order, which focuses its tunnel vision solely on "reducing animal suffering." All the while, animals are still being made into meat machines, processed by people who are forced to work as labor machines—both traded around in monetary terms, exploited, and used for capital's ends. Capitalism defines human and animal roles within society while veganism merely *obscures* this relationship by promoting illusory "compassionate" consumerism.

A related ideology, popular among radical animal activists, green anarchists, and environmental activists, blames the harm done to animals and the earth on all humans and specifically on human nature. This is thinly-veiled misanthropy. Animal liberationists elevate the condition of animals because they are seen as defenseless, peaceful, and innocent, whereas humans are seen as lacking these qualities. A misanthrope would say some or all humans are inherently bad, cruel and uncaring, or even that many humans love to kill, torture and hurt.⁸ They would say this is human nature. But these acts aren't a product of our nature; we are not governed by instinct or an abstracted idea of human nature. Nor does human history give credence to the notion that human beings are inherently cruel and destructive. This mess of imposed misery and domination is a product of human *society*, not of a human nature that must be repressed or made moral.

The various institutions that comprise society govern our actions within it. We are not mere individuals doing whatever we want. We have very few choices as to how we survive, all of which are governed by buying the products of exploitation and being exploited ourselves to make them. We are continually taught to accept this life, much like prisoners are conditioned into accepting their cells. Misanthropism does not explain or illuminate hierarchical and exploitative social relationships. It is merely a lazy ideological excuse for not thinking critically about the problems we are presented with.

Attacking the capitalist system and its consequences requires us to understand and act against it as a systematic whole. Otherwise, the opposition will take the form it usually does, playing into the ideology of reform and radicalism without any critical theory applied to how and what we must attack. Ideology makes sheep out of people. Because we are told, or we tell ourselves, we are free does not mean we are actually so. We will have to be critical of all theory,

ideology, and practices if we are to determine how useful they are in transforming, or better yet, *destroying* this society of exploitation.

Just Do It: The Activist

I firmly believe that our focus must be on ending the suffering and the death as quickly and efficiently as possible. If we all do as much as we can, the 21st century WILL be the one to usher in animal liberation.

-Anonymous⁹

The supposedly revolutionary activity of the activist is a dull and sterile routine—a constant repetition of a few actions with no potential for change.

-Andrew X., "Give Up Activism"

Activists play a specific *role* in our society. They are the specialists in social change much like artists are the specialists in culture. This specialization separates one group of people from the rest of society. This condition is not accidental, as it is in the nature specialization to be exclusive. The activist manages and represents social struggles, confining them to single issues and recruiting members to their cause. This is problematic from a revolutionary perspective, which is concerned with transforming current social relations instead of reproducing them.

The animal liberation movement reproduces the activist role by standing above and outside the realm of struggles that are inclusive and relevant to the exploited. Animal activism dedicates itself to specific causes and excludes those who do not adhere to its codes of morality and lifestyle.¹⁰ Likewise, it glorifies self-sacrifice, an idea that is absolutely detrimental to liberation of any kind.¹¹ Activists see sacrifice and suffering as some sort of skills most people are incapable of. The activist must change society for others, for the supposed benefit of others. The masses must be educated and shown the importance of a cause or an issue. The animal liberation movement would make every human a vegan, regardless of how little it will actually help anyone determine the conditions of their lives. The worker trying to support a family will find very little inspiration in a vegetarian diet if it does nothing to change the economic noose tied around his or her own life. A vegan diet does not make dissatisfaction any more palatable.

This is not the only reason why many people do not take animal liberation very seriously. The animal activist subculture limits interaction amongst non-activist people and obstructs an understanding of the struggles of others. Subcultures, activist or not, create divisions and obstacles between the exploited. They require others to adhere to their codes of thinking, conduct, and fashion, ultimately alienating themselves from the possibility of building affinity and solidarity with others. Who wants to constantly be told what to do, how to think, and what to wear? An activist group can isolate itself from this world, but they shouldn't expect that anyone else wants to share in their self-imposed isolation.

Some activists may see this isolation as another selfless sacrifice for the greater good. One must sacrifice for someone else, some animal, some abstraction, some issue or some cause. In the process, one does not act out of their own interests but the interests of someone or something else. You can get the shit beaten out of you at a demonstration or go to jail for liberating animals. The activist will claim that these are necessary sacrifices for just causes and that your personal suffering will lead to less suffering for others. This is the myth of the martyr represented in action. Suffering is not alleviated by causing more suffering for one's self. Modern life is already perpetuated by sacrifice—at work, in school, under

capitalism. That is not to say we should see something that sickens us and become passive and avoid risks. Rather, we should take action because we *want* to and not because we feel we have to. Then the risk we take is the risk of living our lives, not sacrificing for an idea.¹² After all, Jesus already died for our sins. Let's not follow in the footsteps of that fool and die for them as well.

In terms of actual practice, animal liberation activists seek successful reform campaigns rather than a widespread challenge to the system as a whole. They are keen on celebrating their self-proclaimed victories. One fur farm closes. A vivisection lab goes out of business. But later, the fur farm comes back in another place with a different owner when the fashion industry successfully markets fur again.¹³ Production starts up again just as it always does. And the cosmetics industry still needs to pour chemicals in rabbits' eyes and inject rats with pharmaceuticals in order to prevent potential lawsuits. So another vivisection lab opens overseas or an existing one increases its business, ultimately leading to more animals being brutalized and killed. The "Road to Victory" that many radical animal activists celebrate is a series of insignificant concessions doled out by the system.¹⁴ Capitalism is flexible enough to reform as long as its overall function is not impeded. And as long as its overall function is not impeded, animals will continue to be commodified and exploited. Let's now take a closer look at the dynamics and practice of this movement.

Lost in the Fog of War: A Look At The Animal Liberation Movement

"Radical" Animal Liberationists

There are many activist campaigns that pride themselves on being radical and grassroots. Radicalism by itself is merely an oppositional *term* used to contrast some method with another. It is ambiguous and certainly does not position a "radical" as having any clear perspective other than being extreme in his or her tactics. There are many who are attracted to the allure of radicalism because it presents itself as an alternative to the reformist tendencies of other groups. This representation is a falsity. The animal liberation movement embraces reform wholly despite some presenting it as radical merely because of the tactics it employs. PETA and SHAC want mostly the same things. They just use different tactics and strategies to achieve the same goals.¹⁵ But "radical" tactics should not be confused with radical goals. Social transformation is not made merely through broken windows and home demos. Departing radically from what exists requires deconstructing "radicalism" and not confusing tactics for philosophy.

Animal Commandos

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) has garnered much support throughout the years for its commando-style tactics of live liberations, sabotage, and fire bombings. These ALF cells are made up of small, decentralized groups of vegetarian or vegan people who carry out actions under certain guidelines; for example, an action can be claimed by the ALF if it either liberates animals or destroys the property of animal industries without any life being harmed in the process. Their short-term aim is to save as great a quantity of animals as possible, and their long-term goal is to "end animal suffering" by putting animal industries out of business.¹⁶ Evidently, the ALF represents

IF THE BEEF DOESN'T KILL YOU, I MIGHT



the same ideological and quantified thinking as the rest of the animal liberation movement.

The allure of the ALF is in part due to their commando-style image of breaking laws in the cover of night. Popular ALF images have an angelic quality to them. They save innocence from evil, just like the boring fairytale themes we are force fed as children. From the point of view of animal liberationists, direct action, while practical for liberating animals, is purely tactical rather than embraced as an ethic for how to interact in the world, outside of representation and mediation. Law breaking of this sort is rationalized in much the same way Gandhi rationalized and validated breaking the law. This perspective adheres moralistically to non-violence and is carried out only with the intent of challenging laws that protect one aspect of social domination while leaving the rest untouched. Commonly, the ALF and its advocates compare the ALF to the Underground Railroad, the network of people that assisted slaves escaping from the South before chattel slavery was officially abolished in the US. This comparison is self-serving and reinforces hero worship—more illusions of grandeur.

The Justice Department (JD) and the Animal Rights Militia (ARM), on the other hand, play into a more militant pro-violence stance. While these groups are much less prolific than the ALF, it is worth noting their development within the animal liberation movement. ARM is known for beating up hunters in England, and JD is known for mailing razor blades to fur farmers and making threats against vivisectionists. Instead of glorifying non-violence like the ALF does, these groups glorify its opposing tactical form: violence. Here develops a tactical ideology still trapped within its own tunnel vision. They counterpose themselves to non-violence, which is seen as a failed method that doesn't "get results" quickly enough, quantifying social change in itself. They see themselves as taking things "a step further." This is the same reasoning that groups such as the Black Liberation Army and the Weather Underground used, culminating in spectacular acts that did nothing to diminish anyone's exploitation and instead *glorified* political violence. Their approach demonstrates the frustration and powerlessness of "radical" action that is divorced from everyday revolutionary

practice. Rather than seeking a qualitative break with a society based upon roles and specialists, these groups reinforce the instrumentality of individuals dedicated to ideologies, not the actual transformation of life for those involved.

Angels of Mercy: In Love With Heroes, Martyrs and Militants

To those who have lost their lives fighting animal abuse and to those who took their own lives when the horrors became too much to bear; to those who gave their freedom....Thank you.

-Robin Webb, British ALF Press Officer

Many animal liberationists love the martyrdom of the ALF. They are revered as selfless and brave, victims of caring too much and suffering for their compassion much like Mother Teresa and Jesus. One representation of this can be found in Ingrid Newkirk's book, *Free The Animals*, which tells the story of a group of people who break laws and risk imprisonment in order to save animals from vivisection labs. This book has been a popular story among animal activists since the 1980s. Its appeal lies in its portrayal of people who are somehow better than the rest of us—more noble, brave, and compassionate. Like a character from a simplistic storybook tale, the ALF warrior risks all to save animals from evil. The animal liberation movement relishes its heroes in the same way the media does, reinforcing leader-and-follower social relations.

Yet many avoid illegal direct action because of the consequences of breaking the law. The risk of personal repercussion then strengthens the myth of the warrior's sacrifice. Breaking the law becomes a task for super humans, not the rest of us. ALF members appear to have been born with special abilities and a fearlessness that we do not possess. On pedestals, they sit like idols for worship. They are the heroes of the animal liberation movement. Below them are people who can only applaud like the spectator applauds a piece of art, which only someone supposedly gifted or extraordinary can produce.



Social transformation needs no martyrs, heroes, or militants. Revolutionary action *must* include a conscious effort to subvert the roles that define our exclusion and powerlessness. The sooner we throw hero worship and martyrdom into the fire, the sooner we can struggle for our own freedom. Revolution begins with each one of us. We are the executioners of fate. We must decide our own future so that no one else will be able to.

You Can't Legislate Freedom

You would have to be mad to expect protection from the State...And I am not a fool.

-Andrea Dorea, N'Drea

The animal liberation movement believes animals should be given legal rights and protections. They applaud bans on cock fighting, a truly insignificant institution in the grand scheme of animal abuses, just because it is seen as helping animals and adding to their number of supposed victories. However they criticize laws that protect businesses that use animals. They accept the state's rationale for why laws exist in the first place and ignore that the legal system regulates society, making it efficient, orderly, and controlled. Laws validate social control, outlawing the ungovernable and protecting the powerful. Laws and their enforcers hope to keep us from tearing the factory farm apart with our own hands.

The state protects animal industries and other capitalist ventures; it is the backbone and brute force of the capitalist system. The law criminalizes anyone who would oppose the smooth functioning of capitalism. Legal codes preserve capitalist social relations; the concept of property and its ownership are thus sanctified. Any appeal for additional laws merely strengthens the power of the legal system and its mythology of justice and fairness. Faith in the law is faith in capitalist exploitation, enforced by cops, bureaucrats, judges, and legislators. They have no interest in changing a social order they reap benefits from. Passing a law banning animal cruelty here, or a law against animals in circuses there, changes very little despite some claiming it as a victory. The factories of production continue to run more and more animals through their mills. Misery continues and the state's legal apparatus ensures it is so.

If we are to take animals out of the degrading system of production, we will have to reject any supposed remedies provided by the electoral and legal mechanisms of the state. The legal system only remedies the problems of those in power. Anyone who opposes the social order will be opposed in law. The ALF at least knows this much. We're better off destroying the entire scheme of alienated political power instead of asking for more stale crumbs and empty concessions. If we oppose capitalism for what it does to animals, we should also *entirely* oppose the states that ensure this system continues enslaving the world to its logic.

Direct Action not Ideology

Animal liberation has the most potential as a *direct act* rather than an ideology. Liberations of animals violate their status as property. Sabotage and destruction of animal industries can be directed against the commodification of animals. However, when these actions are done with the ultimate goal of animal liberation, they remain confined to a perspective that cares only for animals. For example, many vivisection lab raid communiqués focus solely on the oppression of animals, usually in moralistic or ideological terms, while ignoring all the

other exploitative and disgusting aspects of the university research lab or pharmaceutical company. Instead of breaking down boundaries to understanding social domination, actions like these erect them and promote limited perspectives that don't take into account the underlying causes that turn animals into commodities. Likewise, the potential of these actions is stunted by their confinement to a single issue instead of being an act of solidarity linked to other social struggles. There are, however, some notable exceptions of people liberating animals and sabotaging animal exploitation operations without claiming their actions for animal liberation.¹⁷ These should not go without notice as they are positive because they do not demarcate themselves as relevant to only one aspect of domination but rather are attacks on one of many forms. If we see domination and exploitation everywhere, we must not limit ourselves; we must attack it *everywhere* it is found.

Against Activism, Towards Active Insurgency

What we are and what we want begins with a no. From it is born the only reason for getting up in the morning. From it is born the only reason for going armed to the assault on an order that is suffocating us.

-Anonymous, "At Daggers Drawn"

The prison that is this society *must be destroyed* if we care to talk about freedom. The factory farm is but one location where we find its misery. This system of exploitation profits from animal and human sweat and blood. It is our common enemy. We will not change anything by asking the rulers to make misery more bearable or to exploit us, but with better wages and bigger cages. Our lives and our relations in the world must be decided on our own terms. To do this, we have a difficult task ahead. Let's not grow full on false promises, moral codes, and blinding ideologies. Let's grow strong on sharp ideas and self-determined action.

Some would say that something must be done. The world is getting worse and we must act. They would tell us that we must do things that make us feel like we can change things. Why, then, not work for animal liberation? If our action is an expression of our desire, there is little hope in counting converted vegans or numbers of liberated hens. Revolution is first and foremost a transformation of our interactions in the world—*qualitative* social transformation not quantified activist victories. We must spit on appeals to those in power and act directly for what we want. Revolution must be a daily practice if we are to have any actual potential.

Something must be done. But we need fire *as much as* we need ideas.¹⁸ To affect any kind of real revolutionary social change, social relations must go beyond adherence to ideologues and their false oppositions, beyond the stratified decision-making, beyond pious proclamations. We want something radically different, a world where we can be free to choose how to live. This is only



possible if we act outside of the social role of activist or consumer, without political parties and their hollow proclamations or non-profit organizations and their single-issue campaigns. We must be liberators of *ourselves*, not slaves to causes driven by religious fervor and ideological blindness.

This critique made of the animal liberation movement should be equally applied against *all* false oppositions and causes—and they are many. We are not seeking converts to adopt our perspective. We are not asking anyone to neglect the exploitation of animals or simply start eating meat. Rather, we wish to foster greater critical thinking and analytical discussion of our own daily actions as well as the theories and practices of social movements.

In order to free ourselves from our shit-shoveling and shit-eating, we must become active participants in an insurgency against ideology, morality, capitalism, and the stranglehold of the state. In a word, we must destroy everything that dominates us because the world is evermore becoming a giant fucking prison. The misery of the factory farm and the vivisection lab is everywhere. So, too, are our targets. We will have to destroy the relations that reproduce and allow this society to exist and begin a disobedience and refusal that is neither civil nor blinded.

As some dead guerilla once said: *destroy what destroys you*. This world will unravel under the unleashing of our desires. For us, destructive rebellion against this shit society is the only thing that holds any promise of liberation. We do not want bigger cages. We want to destroy *all of them* entirely.

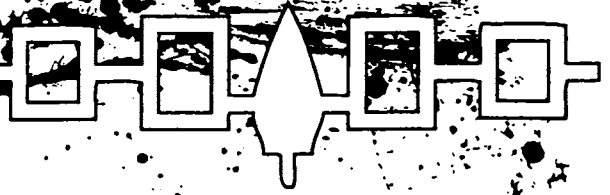
It is not only the animals who depend on us to set them free from this world. It is we who must ultimately feel the wind of freedom on our faces.

Aden Marcos

Endnotes

1. For info on the ALF: <http://www.animalliberationfront.com>. For info on the radical animal liberation movement: <http://www.nocompromise.org>. For news about illegal direct action for animals: www.directaction.info. Likewise, the internet is full of endless amounts of information. Probably more than you'd ever care to read about anything.
2. This phrase is taken from Albert Einstein. Groups like Vegan Outreach and PETA like to use this and other celebrity quotes in order to prove that not only should we trust these revered people but that they too believe in animal rights and so should we.
3. Worldwide consumption of oil is 2.73 billion gallons per day. Each day 31.5 billion gallons of oil are at sea being transported. Not all spills come from tankers. Some come from storage tanks, pipelines, oil wells, and tankers and vessels cleaning out tanks. This does not account for the many more tens of millions of gallons of oil that are spilled by consumer dumping, also still a consequence of industrial capitalism that factors in no environmental costs into its products. Source: "Analysis of Oil Spill Trends in the United States and Worldwide" (http://www.environmental-research.com/publications/pdf/spill_statistics/paper4.pdf)
4. In 1989, the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Prince William Sound, Alaska spilling nearly 10.8 million gallons of oil. The spillage was only 34th largest worldwide spills but was the largest in U.S. waters. The result was major environmental damages, e.g., 35,000 seabirds, 2,800 sea otters, 300 harbor seals, 250 bald eagles, up to 22 orcas, and billions of salmon and herring eggs died and there were major damages to fisheries.
5. The industrial product distribution system is so because the larger a market a product has, the more profit can be made from it. This fact demonstrates capitalist profit-growth through consumer market expansion.
6. This is descriptive of relativism, the theory that conceptions of truth and moral values are not absolute but are relative to the persons or groups holding them. What is wrong in one culture may not be in another. This is clearly demonstrated in many cultures throughout the world. Some cultures were and some still are vegetarian. Others, like the Inuit, consume only meat. Most of these dietary habits developed around environmental circumstances and resource availability and evolved into cultural tradition.
7. For more on critical thinking and the Chernyi essay, see the pamphlet *Critical Thinking* at: <http://anti-politics.net/distro/download/criticalthinking.doc>
8. This, of course, does not usually apply to misanthropes themselves since often they see themselves as somehow better or more caring than most everyone else. The logical progression of misanthropy leads to repulsive forms of arrogance.
9. Taken from the article "Progress of the Animal Rights Movement" on the ALF website.
10. It is common to hear in animal liberationist circles gossip about who "sold out" veganism by eating some animal product of some sort. This type of conversation reflects the banality of much of today's conversations in which our alienation makes us prefer not to concern ourselves with the reality of our alienation.
11. This does not mean people fighting for social transformation will not be harmed or killed by those in power. Rather, it is simply not liberating to glorify punishment as some expression of social struggle. Martyrdom is so fucking boring and uncreative. When you're dead, you're dead. All the possibilities and dreams for your life then disappear.
12. It is worth wondering how many people have turned away from activism after feeling like sacrificial lambs. People who have snatched out co-defendants in legal cases may have felt lengthy prison terms were not sacrifices they were willing to make. This, however, does not mean they aren't pieces of shit for sending someone else down the river. But it is useful to try understanding how and why people make these decisions so that we can understand and prevent them in the future.
13. This is clear when looking at the trends in annual fur animal production in the US and abroad. Fluctuations in the fur market, while at times affected by animal activism, have yet to result in the decline of the fur industry completely. If something can be sold, it will be marketed and produced. Even if the fur industry were to be destroyed, some other type of miserable exploitation would fill its place.
14. The term "Road to Victory" originated in the British animal liberation movement but the concept behind it applies to the North American perspective as well. The idea that one successful campaign or another is culminating in some grand victory is, sadly, an illusion probably promoted in order to stave off complete disillusionment.
15. The Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign is a perfect example of this. They use various forms of intimidation and harassment towards the goal of crippling a single vivisection company to put it out of business. PETA works for the same thing but with tactics that do not alienate their loyal membership base. There is nothing radical about closing one vivisection company's labs when another one will fill that market demand and begin killing animals just the same.
16. Source: ALF website.
17. Biteback magazine (www.directaction.info) and other pro-animal direct action advocate groups often report these actions though don't make a point to differentiate them from actions claimed by the ALF. It's very likely they see any action involving animal issues as being undertaken towards the goal of animal liberation. We, however, see direct action for animals as positive when it isn't accompanied by the foolish claims of animal liberation.
18. Someone else once wrote this very fine point. Sorry I cannot credit them because I do not remember who said it. Still, it is an important point: practice is strongest when informed by the dynamism of critical ideas. Likewise, ideas are only as strong as their practical application. Otherwise, theory becomes merely another hollow intellectual pursuit.

THE SIX NATIONS LAND RECLAMATION



On February 28, 2006, in Ontario, Canada, a small group of people from the native reserve known as "Six Nations of the Grand River" reclaimed a nearby piece of their land that Henco Industries was using for a housing development called the Douglas Creek Estates. Barricades and a banner reading "Six Nations Land" were placed at entrances to the site. At the time, Henco had plans for some 200 homes, though construction had only begun on less than a dozen. The project would have been a major expansion of the town of Caledonia, which is already within sight of the northeast edge of the reserve.

The reclamation site was raided by heavily armed police on April 20th and has been subject to numerous racist protests and assaults by residents of Caledonia since then. With blockades, sabotage, and physical force, the indigenous land defenders at the site have so far successfully beaten back all attacks. Natives from other reserves and indigenous nations across Canada traveled to the site to take part in its defense and initiated demonstrations and blockades in their own territories. Non-natives across the country have also participated in support activities for the reclamation and some have traveled to the site to offer their assistance. From Vancouver, a small group of insurrectionary anarchists, of which I was a part, made a trip to the site. The resistance of Six Nations people to both development and the cops inspired us, and we wanted to familiarize ourselves with the situation, uncover prospects for solidarity, and further develop our own struggle against capitalism and the state.

A History of Repression and Resistance

While Canadian cities and towns in the surrounding area continue to expand rapidly, Six Nations of the Grand River, with the highest population of any reserve in Canada, hasn't grown in more than a century. The reserve is the product of the American War of Independence, in which most nations of the Six Nations Confederacy allied with the British. Traditional land in New York state was lost to the Americans. As compensation, the British General and Governor of Quebec, Frederick Haldimand, granted six miles on each side of the Grand River in southern Ontario to the Confederacy in 1784. Prior to this, in the Nanfan Treaty of Albany in 1701, the Confederacy had claimed some of the land in this area as hunting grounds, which the British were not to disturb. By the 1840s, most of the Haldimand Tract had been stolen by armed settlers and government agents, or sold-off by Confederacy chief Thayendanegea (Joseph Brant). This left only the reserve of today, which is about 5% of the original grant of almost one million acres of land.

In October of 1924, an Indian Agent and 20 Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers interrupted a Confederacy meeting at the reserve and decreed that they would now be governed by

the Indian Act, the Canadian government's repressive legislation against indigenous peoples. Books, documents and sacred wampum belts were also confiscated. The Canadian government's elected band council system was imposed, and elections were held two weeks later, with only 52 people participating. In March of 1959, more than a thousand Six Nations people descended on the band council house and occupied it. Eight days later, the RCMP riot squad was sent in to crush the resistance.

In 1994, concerned with the potential contamination of the reserve's water supply, land defenders from Six Nations camped out on an island in the Grand River to stop the construction of a sewer pipeline. In 2003, Six Nations people camped out and built a longhouse in the Red Hill Valley to stop the building of a highway ramp. Hamilton city police raided the longhouse and made 14 arrests, and construction crews destroyed the longhouse.

The 2006 land reclamation at Caledonia is a continuation of this history of resistance. It is also the continuation of the history of resistance of the Mohawk Nation, which is a member of the Confederacy. They have been at the forefront of the indigenous struggle in Canada, with various blockades, occupations and clashes with the police, the most significant being the 1990 Oka crisis, an armed confrontation between Mohawk warriors and Canadian soldiers at the Kanehsatake and Kahnawake reserves in Quebec. The rebellion of 1990 grew into a social insurrection when the Mohawks of Kahnawake, using only their fists, feet and rocks, beat back an attempted raid by the army. Solidarity actions spread to indigenous reserves and territories across Canada, with road and railway blockades, and sabotage against bridges and electrical towers. It also inspired non-natives throughout the country, including Vancouver's Frances Street squatters who built barricades in the street to defend their homes from eviction by the police.

The Escalation of the Conflict

Although the 2006 Six Nations land reclamation at Caledonia started off relatively low-key, it began to escalate in March as a court injunction and ultimatum to leave the site were issued. On March 22nd, more than 200 people, led by clan mothers, gathered to defend the site from an expected police raid that never materialized. In the mean time, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) built-up their forces and occupied a former school in Caledonia. Also a few hundred residents of the town attended a protest rally against the Six Nations reclamation on April 4th.

On April 12th, a demonstration in support of the Six Nations land reclamation was held in Vancouver, organized by the International Indigenous Youth Conference Secretariat, Redwire Native Youth Media, and No One is Illegal-Vancouver. Police got pushy with the demonstrators as they made their way to the Main Street police station, and people responded by yelling at the cops.

On April 20th, more than 100 heavily-armed OPP officers raided the reclamation site and used pepper-spray and tasers while making 16 arrests. Land defenders fought back and un-arrested people as more than 200 natives flooded into the site from the nearby reserve. Two cops were reportedly injured and hospitalized, and a police van window was smashed as the cops retreated. New barricades, consisting of burning vehicles, tires, and wood, as well as dumped gravel, were set up on the Highway 6 bypass and Argyle Street, which is the main road through Caledonia and the old highway respectively. A footbridge that goes over a railway line in the area was burned down and the remains were left to block the railway. Masked indigenous warriors with batons, baseball bats, and socks filled with rocks maintained patrols of the site to prevent another police invasion. That same day, Mohawks at the Kahnawake reserve raised flags on top of the Mercier Bridge as a show of solidarity with the Six Nations defenders. Kahnawake Mohawk warriors said they were engaging in defensive vigils at entrances to the reserve "to ensure that no further violence is initiated by the Governments of Canada and Ontario upon our people."

In the wake of the raid, spokespeople for government-funded Native political organizations such as the Assembly of First Nations, the Metis Nation of Ontario, the Union of Ontario Indians, and the Six Nations band council urged Natives from across Canada to stay away from the reclamation site.

The following day however, Mohawks at the Tyendinaga reserve in Ontario acted in solidarity with the reclamation by blocking a Canadian National railway line with a bus and burning material for about 20 hours, shutting down national freight and passenger service. Also that day, a solidarity demonstration was held on the Seaway International Bridge at the Mohawk reserve of Akwesasne, which is carved-up by the Canada/US border.

On April 22nd, Secwepemc Native Youth Movement members at the Neskonlith reserve in British Columbia responded to the police raid of the reclamation by setting up camp and posting billboards, banners and Unity/Warrior flags along the Trans-Canada Highway. The billboards proclaimed, "Stop OPP Terrorism" and "OPP out of Six Nations." On April 24th, there was a Vancouver solidarity demonstration for the Six Nations defenders. It was primarily organized and controlled by members of government-funded native institutions, who created a "security" team for the march in liaison with the police. The demonstration was attended by about 400 people at its height and ended at the entrance to the Lion's Gate Bridge, stopping one direction of traffic for about an hour. Masked native youth seemed eager to confront the police and to take up both lanes of traffic, but the security team pushed people out of the opposing lane and acted as a buffer between the crowd and the cops. In the Vancouver Sun newspaper, a Vancouver police spokesperson described the protest organizers as "cooperative" and said that no arrests were made at the event because the Vancouver Police Department "allow[s] democratic peaceful protests to take place in this city." A handful of insurrectionary anarchists participated in the demonstration, distributing leaflets about the resistance at the reclamation site. Previously, anarchist comrades had put up posters around the city and talked to people on the streets about the reclamation.

On May 22nd, Six Nations people removed the blockade of Argyle Street only to be attacked by a crowd of racist Caledonians. A brawl erupted between the Caledonians, native warriors and OPP officers, in which the warriors came out on top. Land defenders then rebuilt the Argyle Street blockade and dug a trench in the road, using heavy machinery. That night, a vehicle was rammed through the gate of an electrical station on

the edge of the reclamation site, causing major damage and cutting-off power to Caledonia and the surrounding area.

Also that day, members of the Cree Nation from the Poundmaker reserve in Saskatchewan blocked a highway bridge for two hours in solidarity. At night, Mohawks expressed their solidarity by holding a tobacco ceremony and setting aflame two cars on the Seaway International Bridge at the reserve of Akwesasne, closing the bridge and US-Canada border crossing for several hours.

The following day, Six Nations people again removed the blockade of Argyle Street. On June 4th, an OPP car was caught driving on the 6th Line road that leads to the Six Nations reserve. This was contrary to the OPP's agreement to defer responsibility for the road to the Six Nations police force. Six Nations people surrounded the car, and the officers were forced to leave the immediate area. Soon afterwards, a barn and a security company vehicle near the reclamation site were set on fire. The security company vehicle was guarding the power station that had been previously attacked.

On June 9th, Six Nations people briefly seized a United States Border Patrol vehicle near the reclamation site; an Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) agent from the US and OPP officers were using it to engage in surveillance. Documents found inside the vehicle confirmed that the OPP used infiltrators to spy on the site and its defenders since the beginning of the reclamation. Arrest warrants were issued for seven people because of this incident and other confrontations that took place that day between Six Nations people, corporate journalists and a white couple in a car who were also spying on the reclamation site.

On June 13th, certain Six Nations people removed the barricades on the Highway 6 bypass and railway. This took place despite the objections of some land defenders and before a unanimous decision could be made on the matter, which would have been accordance with the traditional Six Nations decision-making process. On June 16th, the Ontario government bought the land in question from Henco. A few days later, the government revealed that the land had been bought for 12.3 million dollars.

David Martin, one of the 16 people arrested during the April 20th police raid, was sentenced on June 14th to one day in jail and a year of probation after he plead guilty to dangerous driving and fleeing police. On June 16, one of the seven people with warrants from the June 9th incidents, Audra Ann Taillefer of Victoria, British Columbia, was arrested by Six Nations police and handed over to the OPP. Another one of the seven people with arrest warrants related to the June 9th incidents, Ken Hill of the Six Nations reserve, was arrested on June 21st to face two charges of assault. Audra Taillefer was released that same day on \$10,000 cash bail and an order to remain in Ontario but to stay away from Caledonia.

On June 28, an unidentified Six Nations man was arrested, and later released on bail, by OPP officers in Brantford, near the Six Nations reserve. Many believe that his arrest was related to the June 9th incidents, but according to the OPP, the arrest was based on an unrelated warrant. A Six Nations reserve newspaper, Turtle Island News, reported that fires were set on a highway bypass in response to this arrest. Reclamation spokeswoman, Hazel Hill said, "the arrest came as a complete surprise and people at the site were angry. We are supposed to be communicating with the OPP policing table, but for some reason they chose not to tell us and this is the result." Turtle Island News also reported that organizers at the reclamation site were able to "calm people" and "douse the fires." Apparently some involved in this reclamation are more than willing to cooperate and dialogue with the state.

At 4:00am in the morning on June 29, the railway line at the reclamation site was barricaded once again for a short time. The media reported that railway equipment was damaged. Unfortunately, clan mothers and traditional chiefs strongly advised the blockaders to leave, and Six Nations police assisted with the removal of the barricades. On August 8th, holding one of their frequent racist protests at the edge of the site, Caledonians were hosed-down with water by land defenders. Also on this day, a judge called for an end to negotiations between the Confederacy and the government until the reclamation was ended.

Trevor Miller of Six Nations was arrested by native police on August 11th at the Grassy Narrows reserve on a June 9th warrant, but he has now been released. In addition, Erwin Ron Gibson of Akwesasne was arrested by Mohawk police at his reserve on September 27th on an OPP warrant related to the June 9th incidents. He was detained at a prison in Hamilton for a time and then released to face his criminal charges in court. On January 3, 2007, Christopher Hill of Six Nations of the Grand River was arrested by Six Nations police on an OPP warrant for allegedly "assaulting a police officer" during the April 20th raid. The assistance in making arrests of Six Nations land defenders that the OPP has been given by native police forces has certainly made their job easier and lowered the potential for retaliatory action. All native police forces in Canada operate under the authority of the Canadian government and enforce Canadian laws. It was the Oka Crisis that largely spurred the growth of native police forces on bigger reserves across the country.

From Six Nations to Vancouver

My comrades and I arrived at the Six Nations reclamation site in late May of 2006 and stayed for a few days. It was a profound experience to be within a zone liberated from the Canadian state and to meet some of the people behind it. Many people at the site appreciated our openness regarding the joy we found in the defeat of the police and racist Caledonians and their halting of the development. This was in contrast to the activists who showed up with a residual charity or volunteer mentality, or who

saw the reclamation as a cause separate from themselves to which they offered their support. Just as the reclamation brought people from the reserve together, it also provided an opportunity for us to meet many strong and passionate individuals who added much motivation to our own fight against oppression and exploitation.

Our inspiration from Six Nations also carried over to the July 1st Anti-Canada march in Vancouver, which was organized by anti-capitalist native traditionalists. During the demonstration, graffiti against colonization and development was spray-painted, and a cop received a paint-bomb to the neck. We continue to draw strength from the reclamation and are looking to develop solidarity projects with the land defenders, including those facing prison and criminal charges.

Sam G.

**Vancouver (indigenous Coast Salish territory), Canada
February 2007**

Solidarity:

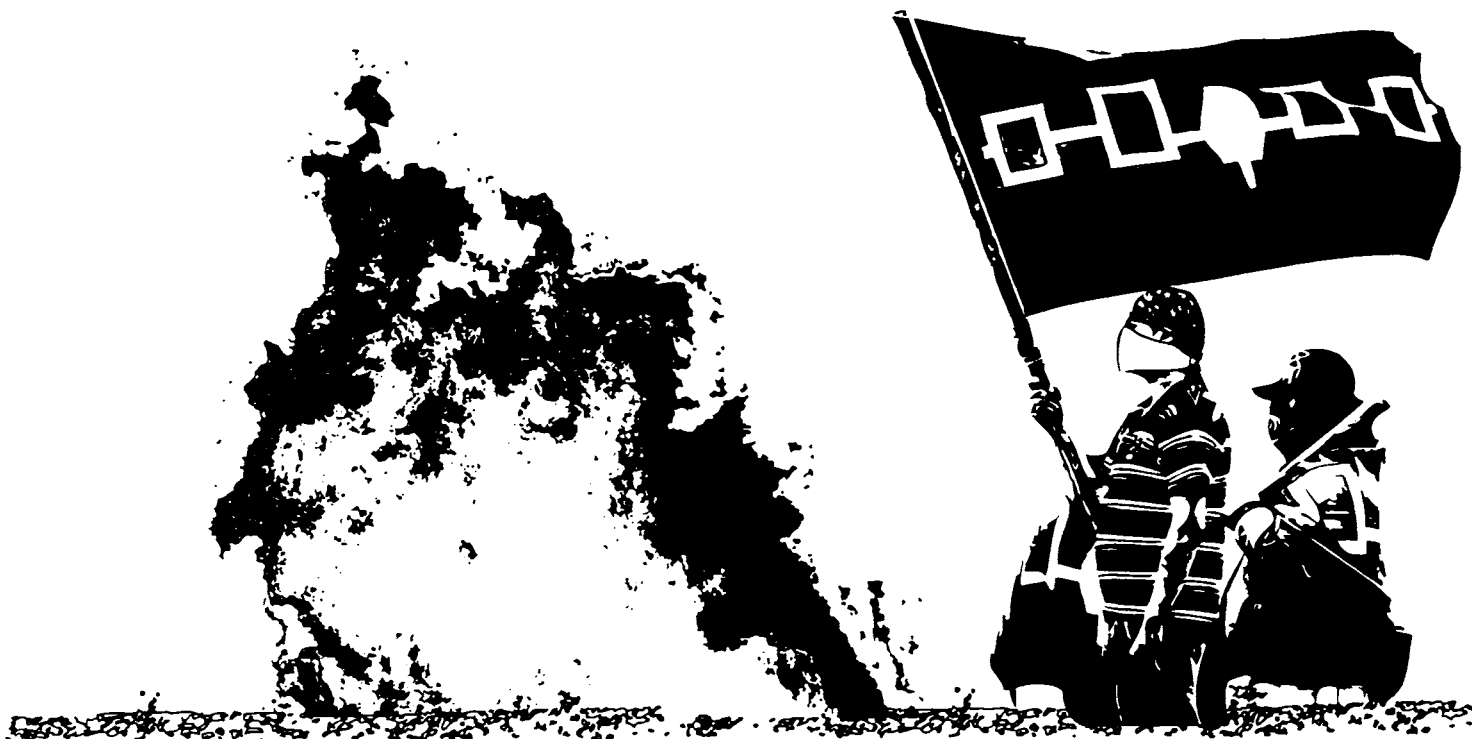
Chris Hill
Wentworth Detention Center
165 Barton Street East
Hamilton, Ontario

For Six Nations legal fund, send checks marked "legal defense" to:
Janie Jameson

RR1
Ohsweken, Ontario
N0A 1M0

Internet resources:

www.reclamationinfo.com
sisis.nativeweb.org
www.friendsofgrassynarrows.com





THE ARMS OF EXPLOITATION ON DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

As the center of technological development for well over a century, the United States is perhaps one of the most difficult areas in which to actualize a critique of progress. The state and various corporations produce an immeasurable amount of propaganda extolling the virtues of new technologies and development. Everything from lead paint to nuclear power has been presented as a blessing that will improve the lives of ordinary people in nearly every way possible. Developments such as suburbs and highways are promoted in the same way. They try time and time again to convince us that we are only a few steps away from a beautiful technological utopia that will cure all diseases and allow us to live lives of leisure. The reality, however, is much different.

Progress is a weapon in capital's arsenal that serves to obscure reality. Ideologically it has been used to justify genocidal schemes in Africa and the Americas, to break down resistance to industrialization and automation, and more recently to reinforce multinational corporations' inroads into places such as Patagonia, West Papua, and the Niger Delta. In the same way that nationalism serves to wed the dispossessed to the causes of various bureaucratic regimes, the ideology of progress serves to confuse the needs of capital with the needs of those whom it exploits.

Unfortunately, within the anarchist milieu there is an extreme polarization concerning conceptions of technology, progress, and development. On one side there are those who are stuck in simple ecological understandings of situations, or who merely see the most recent advances as just another part of civilization. On the other hand there are those who can hardly see beyond the workplace and who actually hope that technology will save us. This dichotomization, while not absolute, encapsulates the current debate, which is counterproductive to critical thinking. We hope to demonstrate that development and the introduction of new technologies, under the guise of progress, are neither the result of some inevitable advance, nor are they part of some innate environmentally destructive impulse of human beings. Rather we hope to make the point that what is called progress is the product of the social forces that govern our world, thus it is a result of class relations within our society. Those that reign over this world govern according to their need to continually

extract profit from our veins, much like a vampire must continually drink the blood of humans. To them, this planet and we the exploited are nothing but factors in an economic equation.

Despite the confusion caused by the ideological strength of progress, there have been many notable situations in which large development projects and technological change have been completely rejected in the United States: wildcat strikes against the automation of factories in the 1950s, opposition to high-tension power lines by the Bolt-Weevils of Minnesota, an active and widespread anti-nuclear movement in the 1970s, attacks against genetic engineering, and hundreds of acts of sabotage over the last several years against various suburban and condominium developments. Clearly a variety of different people, including farmers, factory workers, and anarchists have seen through the smoke and mirrors of the shiny, clean future, and have seen the shit that lies underneath.¹

We see the fight against progress as one front in the social war, and certainly an area that deserves much more consideration, but a type of consideration that breaks through the bounds of the current debate. We hope to make our point more clear, that progress serves only capital, by presenting a few examples.

Closing the Loop on Industrial Workers

Automation or mechanization, any change in the process of production, is carried out at the expense of the workers.

-Martin Glaberman, *Punching Out*

Nearly every workplace is the site of a continual struggle over the form and content of work. There is a constant need for management, along with their union sidekicks, to take disciplinary measures against slacking off, absenteeism, sabotage, and theft. A variety of technological devices have been used in this battle as of late: surveillance cameras in workplaces, electronic time cards, GPS devices in delivery trucks and buses, and in certain sectors, multi-tasking software to maximize work time. Unfortunately these are nothing new and are in fact part of a long history of machines and technological rationality being used to pump more profit from our veins.

The introduction of the factory system served only capitalists who, by necessity, wanted their workers to be able to produce more in less time while concentrated in one space under the watchful eye of bosses and foremen. The sharp increase in the division of labor, and the herding of workers into these prisons reduced people to the appendages of machines; at the same time these people were robbed of their own appendages, which were crushed and torn to pieces, obviously improving their quality of life. Later Frederick W. Taylor, perhaps one of the sickest minds of the 20th century, was responsible for introducing "time and motion studies" to reduce workers' movements to only those which were necessary to complete a task. During these, specialists would time workers' activities and observe their movements in order to figure out how they could more efficiently suck the life from workers' veins. Taylor's love of efficiency won him many admirers including those saviors of the workers Lenin and Trotsky.²

Despite, or perhaps because of the rigid discipline imposed by mechanization and the factory system, the introduction of new technology in the workplace has often been hotly contested. The Luddites' insurgency is an obvious example of resistance to technological change. Their legacy, which was lost upon Marx, was evident to French silk workers in Lyons who took part in the same activity decades later, and to many other people across the globe that smashed machines and set fire to factories. American workers were no exception to this trend. One widespread case of resistance to progress, but one sadly ignored by most radicals, was the battle against the automation of factories in the United States.³

Automation, or the use of automatic machinery, derives from a set of technologies created in state-funded university laboratories and military-run labs during World War II. In the most basic sense, automation is the attempt to make processes automatic through the application of control devices to minimize human input. At that time, Numerical Control (NC) devices allowed data recorded on punch cards to be inserted into machines. The amount of data stored on these cards made machines capable of not only performing intricate tasks, but also capable of performing different tasks depending on the input. So for example, a worker's movements at a workstation, down to the smallest detail, would be recorded on to a punch card for use by a machine. Thus the skill and training that workers developed over years and years were stolen from them and became the sole property of a machine within an automated factory. These NC devices were later replaced by Computerized Numerical Control devices which allowed for even greater task variability.

NC was developed in the late 1940s by control engineers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), funded and directed by the US Air Force, who focused their research on ways to transform the metalworking industry. Their mission was to create automatic, yet versatile, machinery which would allow management the ability to completely control the work process. A few different technologies were developed, but the Air Force chose NC for its ability to eliminate resistance to the chain of command. As a military organization, the Air Force was most interested in achieving its own ends, the effects of which were of little consequence to them. Thus it should be no surprise then that they underwrote and promoted the development of machinery that allowed for very little "human error," which in practical terms means resistance to the commands of bosses on the job, and to commanders in the military. The development of automation was therefore not a natural step forward, or a necessary change, but rather a technology that represented the needs of one class over another.⁴

This technology was promising for capitalists as well, who have always sought ways to maximize profit by more tightly controlling their workforce. The possibility of taking power away from the shop floor through automating production was certainly in line with both their long-term goals and immediate needs. Even in the 1800s factory managers and engineers dreamed of a fully automated factory, but could not put it into practice. In 1948 and 1949, Ford's attempts to implement a massive speedup in production were defeated by striking autoworkers. Ford had begun to experiment with limited automation prior to this. However, the defeat of their speedup led to a greater focus on replacing recalcitrant workers with machines.⁵

As historian David Noble argues in his book *Progress Without People*, the implementation of automatic machinery increased management's strength in a variety of ways. First, it allowed for the ability to discipline workers through the removal of most, if not all, decision-making power. This went hand-in-hand with further deskilling. Knowledge of the operation of production and difficult-to-master skills were incorporated into the processes of machines, thus decreasing workers' value. The other more obvious assault was the complete replacement of human beings by machines. Prior to the implementation of automation, workers were needed for a variety of tasks including the loading and unloading of parts, as well as their transfer to the next station in the line. With automation, machines eliminated the human role in moving these parts. By decreasing the number of people in factories, the fighting power of workers was severely diminished. Workers in factories facing automation, or in the process of being automated, were keenly aware of the profound changes being wrought, and rightly viewed this new technology as a weapon in the hands of the enemy. Unions, the co-managers of the industrial working class, unsurprisingly sold out their membership, allowing many people to be replaced by machines and making many jobs even more monotonous and terrible.⁶

An early wildcat strike against automation occurred in Detroit at the end of 1954. Around 40 metal grinders at Chrysler's Mack Plant walked off their job in protest of new equipment being used, but they were ordered back to work by their union local president. The first shift resumed, but hours later, the workers of the incoming shift walked off immediately. In total, these walkouts forced 12,000 other workers down the line to be idle for several hours, as well as idling 5,000 workers at another plant.⁷ That was just the beginning because the United Auto Workers union (UAW) was scheduled to renegotiate contracts with Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors (GM) in the summer of 1955. When all negotiations were over, the UAW and the companies

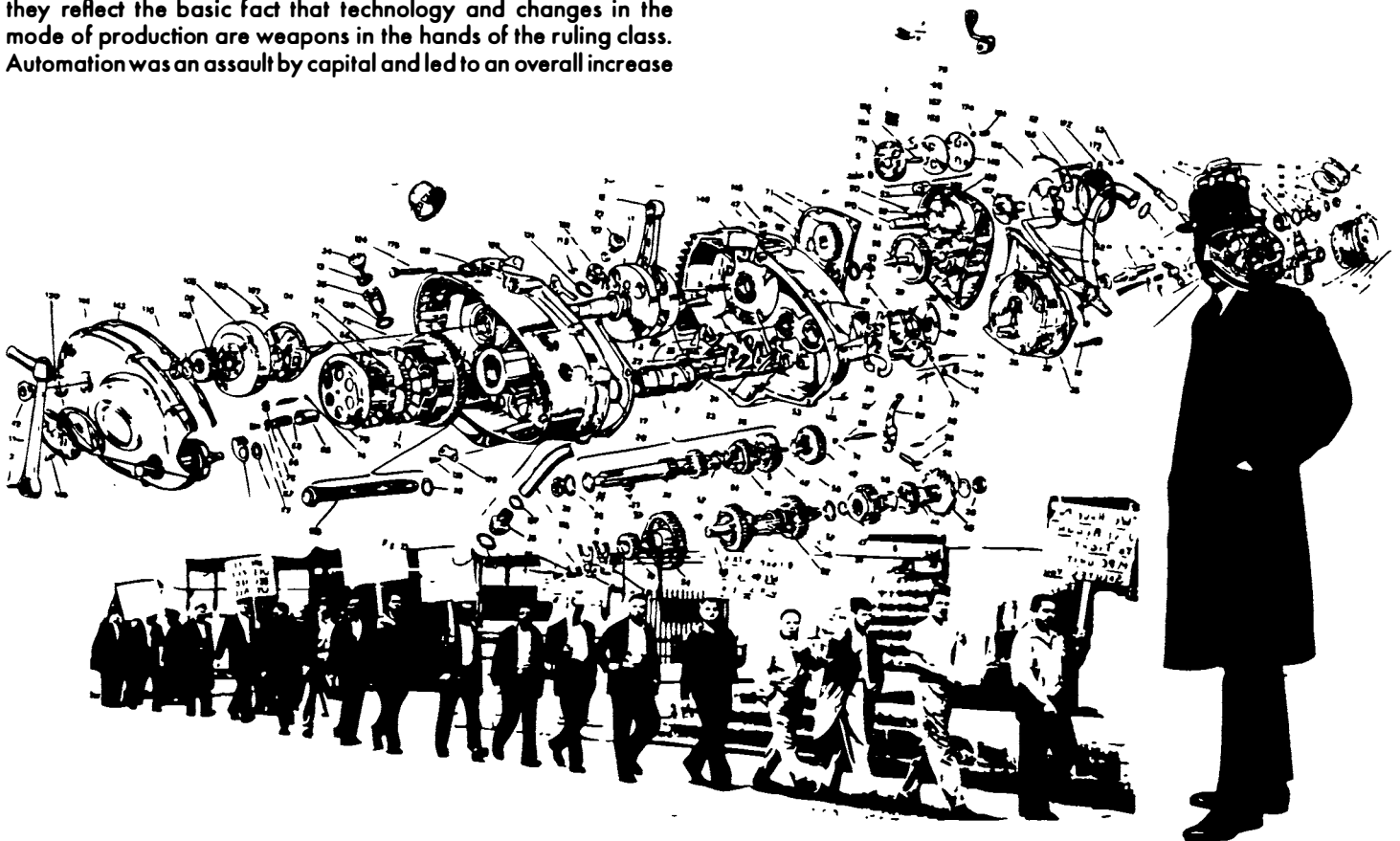
signed contracts that allowed for a production speedup and the full implementation of automation in exchange for concessions such as extended unemployment benefits, better pension plans, and preferred hiring for displaced workers. Martin Glaberman, an ex-autoworker and a participant in the communist group Facing Reality, described these concessions as "the golden chain that was to bind the workers to the most intense and alienating exploitation to be found anywhere in the industrialized world."⁸

The UAW, having given up on the issue of automation for the length of its new contract, forced autoworkers across the US to resort to their own devices and forms of organization to fight back. Based on their informal work groups in the factories, workers were able to organize small wildcat strikes, which would then spread throughout production facilities, and later to other plants as well. In early June of 1955, immediately following the signing of the Ford contract and during negotiations with GM and Chrysler, dozens of wildcat strikes broke out. In Trenton, New Jersey, several hundred workers walked out of a GM plant, prompting shutdowns. In Cleveland, Ohio, hundreds walked off the job at three different plants, idling more than 10,000 other workers. In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, a thousand people walked off the night shift at a Chrysler body plant and set up picket lines outside. That same week in Kansas City, Ford's plant was closed all week due to a wildcat strike, and one GM plant was shut down for a day. In Ford's most modern and most highly automated plant, Brook Park (outside of Cleveland), absenteeism, sabotage, and wildcat strikes were quite common. Autoworker activity across the country impeded production significantly that week, causing a 12% decrease in GM output and allowing only 17,000 of the planned 38,800 cars to be produced at Ford plants. Unfortunately, due to a variety of factors, output was actually larger than in years prior, causing no damage that auto manufacturers could not weather.⁹

While these wildcat strikes were not simply about automation, they reflect the basic fact that technology and changes in the mode of production are weapons in the hands of the ruling class. Automation was an assault by capital and led to an overall increase

in exploitation. The UAW, as a union, could not supersede its position as an apparatus that bargains with management over conditions of work, which are nothing more than conditions of exploitation. It could merely modify them, but never eradicate them outright. Also, as a legal entity, when a union signs a contract it must enforce that contract, and a fundamental part of any labor contract is that the workers go to work and continue producing for the gain of capital. Hence during negotiations with GM, and following the signing of the Ford contract, the UAW took an active part in ending wildcat strikes through disciplining the rank and file.¹⁰ The introduction of automation was not something that could be defeated through compromises.

There are plenty of lessons to be learned from the implementation of automation in auto plants. Hundreds of thousands of autoworkers were taking part in self-organized activity against the wishes of their bosses and their union and fighting the implementation of new technologies. Autoworkers were not simply using radical activity to contest the terms of their exploitation; instead they were contesting the arrangement of some of the most fundamental social relations. And though the battle against automation was lost due to the collaboration of unions and auto manufacturers, this was only one phase in a larger worker insurgency that would spread not only across the US, but also beyond the factory walls in the 1960s and 1970s.¹¹



Why I-69

The road to the future leads us smack into the wall.

-Jacques Cousteau

While the wildcat strikes against automation are an example of resistance to the large-scale implementation of new technology, there are other important battles against progress such as resistance to development projects. Like technology, development is usually presented in an abstract, ahistorical way—something that just happens, or that is natural. However, both are products of capitalism and serve to further and strengthen its hold over the world. While they are presented as projects that help everyone, this is simply not the case. Highways, suburbs, and other development projects would never have been built without capitalist social forces and reflect solely the needs of capital. One recent struggle against development is the fight against the extension of Interstate 69 (I-69) in southwestern Indiana.

I-69 is a multi-lane highway that currently connects Indianapolis, Indiana to Port Huron, Michigan. The I-69 extension, officially sanctioned by the federal government in 1998, is designed to connect Canada and Mexico via the United States. The project was conceived of as a trade corridor linking the three nation-states involved in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and was dubbed by media outlets as the “NAFTA Superhighway.” It is to link with preexisting corridors, and the planned route now involves multiple interstate corridors running through Indiana, Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, and Tennessee. In January 2003, state officials in Indiana finally set down their plan for the I-69 extension to run from Indianapolis, through Bloomington and down to Evansville.

I-69, however, is not some aberration in the history of highway and infrastructure design, nor is it the so-called abuse of “public” infrastructure by “private” interests. The first major infrastructure project in the history of the United States, part of “the American System” plan of 1816, was a bid to improve the nation’s transportation framework to strengthen the position of American manufacturers in the global market. The construction of the Erie Canal, designed to connect the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean, and the Cumberland Road, which connected the Midwest to the East Coast, were a result of this project. Similarly, the construction of the interstate highway system in the US in the early 1950s was part of the auto industry’s expansion plan, as well as a national defense initiative during the Cold War. Thus, I-69 is certainly a project that carries on the legacy of its predecessors; infrastructure projects are a manifestation of capitalist social relations and a means for their expansion.

Resistance to major highway projects is also not a new phenomenon. The 1990s saw a variety of actions against the construction of highways across England. Efforts varied from citizen participation and counter-planning, to radical actions such as occupations, sabotage, and open destruction of property.¹² In much the same way, the fight in Indiana has been multi-faceted. The first oppositional activity against I-69 came about in the late 1990s by environmentalists in the Bloomington area. They, along with many small farmers, denounced the project for breaking up rural ways of life, spreading sprawl, and for the simple fact that new construction would require the expropriation of land as well as the destruction of multiple forests. Unfortunately, I-69 opponents developed a counter proposal to reroute the highway outside of their region, rather than opposing it outright.

Since the project was merely in the preliminary stages, activity against it lulled. In 2002 though, when the state of Indiana was deciding which route to pick for I-69, opponents participated in state-sponsored public forums, sent letters to their representatives, and on one occasion presented over 125,000 signatures against the planned route to the governor’s office. Once the official route was picked in January 2003, there was further letter writing, an Earth First! banner that failed to even unravel drop, and in late 2004, members of environmental and citizen’s groups gave the new governor anti-I-69 literature in hopes that he would consider their alternative plan. Hilarious.

All of these tactics read straight from the citizen activist’s handbook; it could be any issue, and the list of activities would read the same: letter writing, petitioning, symbolic protests, dialogue with state officials, and of course the mandatory whining, begging, and groveling. These types of tactics, promoted by the state, capitalists, and various micro-politicians, serve to undermine social conflict, to transform it into an easily manageable situation where “the people” work together with “their representatives” to come to an agreement. After all, we’re all on the same team.¹³

In addition, this model presents further problems. Without going into a lengthy critique of activism, it suffices to say that activism is a historical social-construct, meaning that like everything else in this world, it is a product of a particular time period and of particular social relations. Housewives, police, and activists are all social categories that serve particular roles in this society. Activists fulfill the role of specialists in social change who intervene in conflicts in order to act as representatives of the people involved and as those who also represent the conflict to the media. It is not a matter of ill intentions, but rather a matter of social roles. Activists are politicians, albeit on a smaller scale.

Therefore as specialists in the field of social change, it should be no surprise that activists further specialize in a particular niche, in the same way an academic carves out some obscure area of study in order to make his or herself more valuable. Rather than attacking the social order, activism is a practice that focuses on “solving” various problems and issues that have their roots in the same system that activists work within. Whatever conflict they are involved in, they in turn reduce them to preordained categories that fit perfectly within a framework that is easily digestible for the media and easily defused by the state. Thus in the fight against I-69, various groups were formed to oppose only parts of the plan: its effects on the environment, the “unwise” and “inefficient” use of taxpayer money, its effects on rural residents and so on. These ignore the fundamental causes and overall role of the I-69 extension and play into the hands of politicians who can cater to these partial critiques. They took a diverse area of social conflict and fragmented it into many issues in order to effectively manage the situation. Activists speak the language of the system – not the language of its destruction—because they are the left wing of that system. Despite the dead-end, reformist nature of the activism against I-69, it did link diverse groups of people who opposed the project, but the way in which they were linked was quite sad.

In the spring of 2005, anarchists and activists in Indiana began organizing the Roadless Summer campaign to fight against the planned international corridor. Those engaged in the Roadless Summer campaign critiqued the construction of I-69 because of the heavy ecological devastation it would cause due to the conversion of fields and forests into dead zones of pavement. In addition, the project was opposed because I-69 is intended as a trade corridor connecting Canada and Mexico as part of

the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Therefore it is not a benign project designed to —according to the governor and other bureaucrats— improve people's lives by making travel time quicker. Instead, I-69 is an essential part in facilitating the quicker movement of commodities across borders. Roadless Summer's critique firmly placed the project within the larger framework of neo-liberal restructuring of capitalism and linked the environmental destruction to its root causes. They avoided compartmentalizing the struggle into various issues, and instead analyzed it in its totality.¹⁴

On the practical side, Roadless Summer used a variety of tactics. Some were interesting, such as protests at I-69 construction offices, office occupations, and harassment of various construction companies through phone calls and faxes. Others were disheartening, such as bike tours of affected areas. Some, however, tried to increase the level of conflictuality. At a small demonstration in June of 2005, dozens of people stormed the entrance of the state capitol, spray-painting the building with anti-I-69 slogans, and some banged on drums like a bunch of hippies.¹⁵ This action resulted in the arrest of over twenty people, and many anti-I-69 groups, including Roadless Summer itself, publicly distanced themselves from the lawbreakers. On another occasion, an I-69 construction office was attacked. The building was spray-painted, a window was shattered, and the attackers tried unsuccessfully to set the building on fire.

While the more radical actions did not spread, anarchist opposition to the project —armed with both a radical critique and a radical practice— pointed to the possibility for an opposition more dangerous to the capitalist system. They made an anarchist critique of the I-69 project that put into question its origins, role, and long-term effects. They attempted to pair this with a radical practice that rejected working with politicians and put emphasis on people using direct action to halt the project. In addition, reform was simply not on their agenda. They opposed the extension outright and did not try to work their way into power in order to manage the mere alteration of the project.

The plans for I-69 are still in the works, and opposition to the project has recently arisen in Texas as well. In Indiana, the state government has chosen to privatize the construction of I-69 in order to minimize its direct involvement, and it has also decided that the extension will now primarily be a toll road. Construction has begun, and one can only hope that I-69 serves as a focal point for further activity in hopes that this situation can possibly move beyond the bounds of activism and become a wider social conflict that challenges the gears of progress.



Use, Misuse, and Industrialism

Many ideas that originated with the capitalist class have been fully imbibed by the exploited. This makes sense considering the fact that capitalism dominates not only the physical territory of this world, but also the realm of discourse and ideas. On a day-to-day basis, many people embrace absurd ideas like nationalism or the concept of "working hard and paying our dues." Capitalist notions of progress have also infected our minds: efficiency for efficiency's sake, machines as metaphors for society and our biological functioning, the confusing of advancements in technology with social progress, and so on. One of the most prominent ideological perspectives on progress is that technology and development are neutral. In fact, the standard objection to any critique of technology or development is that they are merely being misapplied, and that, of course, capitalism misuses technology and development for its own purposes. This implies that if technology were simply under new management, or even self-management, it would be socially beneficial and non-alienating, and the so-called irrationalities and inefficiencies would be done away with. Plainly stated, this is bullshit. A brief look at the central components of industrialism demonstrates quite clearly that it is not a neutral means, but rather a system born of alienation and one that will perpetuate alienation for as long as it exists.

Industrialism is not just an assemblage of machinery; it is technology and social organization wrapped into one. Its central elements are the factory system and mechanization, neither of which can be separated from the other. The factory system is the method of organizing people for production within a factory. This way of relating was created by capitalists for capitalist reasons, not for the benefit of those who work within it. Tasks are endlessly subdivided into their most reducible form because it is most efficient for the chain of production. Then people endlessly repeat these reduced tasks also for the sake of efficiency. No one wholly creates anything; rather, everyone is forced to become a specialist in the tiniest niche. This instrumental use of people, by its reductionist nature, won't bring any sort of joy, fulfillment, or intellectual stimulation, no matter who manages it.

The use of people as instruments is reflected on a greater scale by the global division of labor necessary for industrial production. This helps hide the reality of mechanization, which is often validated by an illusory "timesaving" claim. Industrialized agriculture is an excellent illustration of this point. A cotton combine can harvest several square miles of cotton in one-tenth the time that scores of human beings could, but this abstracts the combine from its social context. Hidden behind its "timesaving" claim is the fact that thousands of human beings are forced to contribute large portions of their lives to the construction and maintenance of these machines; they work in dozens of other industries to mine and process metals, to extract oil and produce plastics, fuels, rubber, pesticides, etc. Thus behind the combine, which appears to be an independent machine, is a vast system of production involving millions of people worldwide and requiring massive resource consumption. The appearance of mechanization's "timesaving" benefits hides behind a massively increased division of labor, which locks human beings in a huge productive apparatus. Los Amigos de Ludd have rightly described this as requiring "[t]he human component...[to] adapt itself to the inertias of an immense system of mechanical dependencies."¹⁶

And what of nature and of the land? Industrialism also transforms the relationship of human beings to the natural world. In *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck gives an insightful description of

how the industrialization of agriculture further separated human beings from the earth. When describing the driver of a tractor, he says, "[h]e could not see the land as it was, he could not smell the land as it smelled..." and "...when that crop grew...no man had crumbled a hot clod in his fingers and let the earth sift through his fingertips. No man had touched the seed... Men ate what they had not raised, had no connection with the bread."¹⁷ This separation from, and instrumental use of, the world around us reflects our use by the system as replaceable parts. Just as we are a gear in the industrial apparatus, so too is the earth merely a resource to be used for production. This can also be seen in the division of physical territory into specialized zones of habitation, resource extraction, wilderness recreation, waste disposal, and so on. Parks are areas where nature can be preserved like a museum. Resource extraction zones such as strip mines, oil fields, tree farms, and monoculture plantations, represent the division of land necessary to efficiently produce for an industrial society. So the physical environment is massively transformed, leaving human beings to inhabit a completely industrial landscape. We are well aware that humans have altered their physical environment for millennia. However, industrialism's strict separations of the land are merely an extension of the separations that capital has either created or greatly accentuated throughout society, such as between work and leisure, or intellectual and physical labor. These divisions are part of our further alienation from the natural world, resulting in the loss of most of our understanding of, or connection to, the sources of life. Why would we simply carry on with this arrangement imposed on us by this nightmare system?

What we are trying to make clear is that industrialism is not simply a technical means. It is an alienating technical system with its own prerogatives. To argue for the maintenance of the factory system and mechanization after capitalism is to argue for the maintenance of an intense division of labor and a mode of production in which human beings are subsumed to the system as replaceable parts. The division of labor forced upon people by industrialism has been critiqued as far back as Marx and Kropotkin because it reduces human beings to appendages of machines, numbs people's minds, and leads to ever-increasing boredom. However the response to the factory system by most revolutionaries amounts to nothing more than proposing cosmetic changes; some hope that rotating tasks will somehow make the drudgery less monotonous. Those radicals who sing the praises of industrialism hope to keep the apparatus and structure while democratically administering it. Maintaining industrialism currently requires massive amounts of coercion, much like all wage labor. The question is, if people freely chose what tasks they wanted to perform, would mines, oil rigs, factories and the like even operate? If we are interested in a world in which people determine their relations with others, then the limitations imposed by industrialism are certainly worthy of a damning critique.¹⁸

Last Words

John Henry told his captain,
'A man ain't nothin' but a man,
But before I let your steam drill beat me down,
I'll die with a hammer in my hand. Lord, Lord,
I'll die with a hammer in my hand.

-The Ballad of John Henry

The fact that technology transforms social relations is undeniable, and it should be no surprise that the last 200 years of development and technological change has served to reinforce capitalism's ascendancy. Capital is continually unloading a slew of present and future problems on those it exploits. We are being left with a physical environment that has alienation built into it; suburbs, high-rises, highways and automobiles, are all alienating by design. Self-managing these, or industrialism, would be like self-managing a prison. If technology and development –in both design and application– reflect capital's needs and interests, then it is fair to say that they will never reflect our own.

We are well aware that we cannot predict the future, and we also know that we will not necessarily have a major influence on what it might look like. And regardless of one's particular vision of a post-revolutionary future, it is plain to see that technology and development function now as a weapon of the ruling class. The examples above, one, of struggle against the implementation of new technology and the other, of resistance to a development project, are an illustration of the fact that what capitalists and bureaucrats call progress and development, is neither neutral, nor unquestionable. Automation was designed in laboratories run jointly by the state, universities, and corporations, working together to more effectively execute military operations. Automation was then applied to workplaces in order to more effectively control workers and to extract greater profits from them. In its origin and plan, the introduction of automation served the needs of the rulers of this world and was instrumental in attacking the power of the industrial working class across the US and Europe. The I-69 NAFTA Superhighway is different in that it is a development project, as opposed to a new technology, but like automation, its origin and design reflect the capitalist system's needs and plans. Subjecting progress to a critical lens is what David Noble calls viewing "technology in the present-tense."¹⁹ Unfortunately, many anarchists, communists, and other assorted radicals fail to do this, thereby ceding important territory in the social war and parroting some of the most idiotic proponents of progress.

For far too long, progress has been reduced to a meaningless debate merely concerned with identifying oneself with a particular ideological brand within the radical milieu. My point here is not to simply stake out ideological territory in order to build more lines of demarcation. Rather, I hope to shift the debate into one that has practical implications. Progress, development, and technological change are not only products of the social order, but also attempts to further the domination of those who rule this world. Thus we must completely destroy them, or be forced to prostrate ourselves even more.

Kellen Kass

Endnotes

1. In the second issue of the St. Louis-based publication *War on Misery*, there is an interesting article about attacks in St. Louis against condominium development.
2. The recently published *A Crime Called Freedom: The Writings of Os Cangaceiros* includes a very interesting piece entitled "Industrial Domestication: Industry as the Origins of Modern Domestication." For more on Taylorism and the Bolsheviks, see *The Bolsheviks and Worker's Control* by Maurice Brinton.
3. For more information on the Luddites, see Kirkpatrick Sale's *Rebels Against the Future: the Luddites and Their War on the Industrial Revolution*. While this book is analytically problematic due to Sale overemphasizing industrialism as something separate from capitalism, the historical work is invaluable. The Spanish publication *Los Amigos de Ludd* also has many articles on early resistance to industrialism in Spain. David Noble also has an essay entitled, "Technology in the Present Tense" that discusses worker resistance to automation, which is available in his *Progress Without People: In Defense of Luddism*.
4. David Noble. *Progress Without People: In Defense of Luddism*.
5. Thomas Sugrue. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. p. 130
6. David Noble. *Progress Without People: In Defense of Luddism*.
7. Due to the fact that many actions against automation went unrecorded, it is difficult to give a full picture of what actually occurred. There are, however, many actions that took place and also managed to make newspaper headlines. It is from these that we have primarily drawn our evidence. "Strike at Chrysler Makes 17,000 Idle," *The New York Times*; Dec 28, 1954 pg. 15
8. Martin Glaberman. *Punching Out & Other Writings*. pg. 105. Without going too deeply into the details of the contract, it suffices to say that it originally appeared to be ground-breaking because it required auto manufacturers to take responsibility for those whom they had put out of work by providing unemployment benefits that would supplement those provided by the state. These are the things that social democratic dreams are made of, but like all dreams of liberals and socialists, they are nothing more than nightmares.
9. Pittsburgh: "Hundreds Back on Job," *The New York Times*; Jun 9, 1955 pg. 25
10. "Trenton Strike Continues," *The New York Times*; Jun 9, 1955 pg. 25
11. Cleveland: "Workers Start Return," *The New York Times*; Jun 9, 1955 pg. 25
12. "Kansas City," *The New York Times*, Jun 12, 1955 pg. F10
13. "Auto Output Increased Despite Wildcat Strikes," *The New York Times*; Jun 18, 1955 pg. 25
14. "G. M. Unions Halt Wildcat Strikes; Parleys Speeded," *The New York Times*; Jun 11, 1955 pg. 1
15. There are a wide variety of books available about worker struggle in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.
16. For more information on the anti-roads campaigns, see "Auto-Struggles: The Developing War against the Road Monster," *Aufheben* #3.
17. With teammates like these, I'd rather shoot myself in the face.
18. Roadless Summer statements are widely available on the internet. Their website, however, is no longer functioning.
19. We contemplated not deriding hippies in this way until we realized that the only people it will offend is drum-banging hippies who may never share our critique or read our crappy magazine.
20. "Utopía y Miseria del Mundo Industrial," *Los Amigos de Ludd* #2, March 2002.
21. John Steinbeck. *The Grapes of Wrath*. Chapter 6
22. For more on the critique of industrialism, see David Watson's essay "Against the Megamachine" in his book of the same title.
23. David Noble. *Progress Without People: In Defense of Luddism*.



FORTRESS EVERYWHERE: TECHNOLOGY AND CONTROL AT THE BORDER

On September 21st of 2006, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the awarding of a \$2.5 billion contract to Boeing Integrated Defense Systems to implement the Secure Border Initiative Network (SBI-Net) along the United States' 6,000 miles of northern and southern land borders.¹ The new contract is part of the \$43.5 billion DHS budget for 2007, with up to 20% increased from the previous year for internal enforcement and border protection. SBI-Net will build a web of new surveillance technology and sensors with real-time communications systems for the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency. The plan also includes funds for additional personnel, vehicles, physical infrastructure for fencing, and virtual fencing of US borders.

The first phase is scheduled to be completed by May 2007 and includes 28 miles of high-tech surveillance and control along the Tucson Sector of the Mexican border near Sasabe, Arizona. The SBI-Net contractors will begin by setting up mobile towers that carry surveillance and communications equipment that Border Patrol agents can use to monitor the border and communicate with each other. Once positions for the mobile towers are finalized in the Tucson Sector, they will be replaced with permanent towers. Boeing then plans to reuse the mobile towers in other Border Patrol sectors to determine the placement of additional towers along the entire Mexican border. Chicago-based Boeing will use nine major subcontractors to accomplish this plan.² The backbone of the virtual fence will be an eventual 1,800 sensor towers equipped with radar, cameras, and other devices that will facilitate the CBP's detection of anyone crossing or attempting to cross the border. Each tower will vary in what equipment it carries because each length of the border varies in climate, terrain, and population density. Some towers will have short-range radars for detecting people at close range, while others will have long-range radars.³

The virtual fence will also include Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), also known as drone airplanes. These weigh as little as 10 lbs. and can track people within a 6-mile range for up to 90 minutes; individual agents will be able to launch and control a UAS themselves. Along with the UAS, satellite phones will enable agents to talk, get data, and possibly get video anywhere in the world without losing their signal, even in canyons or other places that aren't covered by cellular towers. Also, sensor towers, rising 80 to 200 feet depending on the terrain, will be equipped with high-powered radars and cameras, as well as electro-optical and infrared cameras that can detect attempts to cross the border at night. Iridium Satellite will set up the system, and Motorola leads the pack of contenders vying to provide the phones.⁴ This system will be equipped with systems to detect underground passageways and ground-based and tower-mounted heat and motion-sensors that will feed information about border activity into a central database. From the central database, information will be sent to border enforcement areas, which are divided into sectors, each

with a local command center. The Boeing system will detect, monitor, and classify potential and actual crossers. At that point, the system will send location and identification data that will enable sector command centers to dispatch agents to the scene. Border Patrol agents will carry handheld devices that will enable them to fingerprint people they apprehend. If the agents are in range of the communications towers, they will be able to instantly identify anyone through fingerprint scans. If the agents are not in range of the towers, they can store the fingerprints until they are in range or until they return to an operations center. This information can then be shared with other law enforcement agencies within and beyond the Border Patrol's parent agency, the CBP.⁵ SBI-Net is a component of the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a plan by the US government to increase control over the millions who cross annually into the country by land, especially over the US-Mexican border.

The Border Today

Despite the rhetoric spouted by politicians and their media mouthpieces about illegal "alien invasions," most undocumented workers enter legally. By the Immigration and Customs Enforcement's own estimates, half the country's undocumented workers enter the United States legally, using temporary visas that they overstay. Unsurprisingly, voluntary departure orders have not worked. However, it is estimated that over a million people cross the border illegally each year, 80% of whom are Mexican. The rest are mostly from Central America. About 45% of all agricultural laborers in the United States are undocumented.

Border control is concentrated around big border cities, which already have extensive border fencing. This means that the flow of undocumented people is diverted into rural mountainous and desert areas, leading to a significant number of deaths. The 2,100-mile border between the United States and Mexico traverses a variety of terrains, including urban areas and deserts. The fence is located along the urban sections of the border where the greatest number of illegal crossings happens. Two of the areas of highest passage include San Diego, California and El Paso, Texas. As a result of the success of the barrier, there has been a marked increase in the number of people trying to illegally cross the Sonoran Desert and the Baboquivari Mountain in Arizona. Because there are few roads leading away from the border in many of these rural areas, some border crossers are forced to pass through 50 miles of inhospitable terrain to reach the first road. This is strategic for the Border Patrol, who, using a combination of fixed checkpoints and mobile patrols, now has more time to catch people than they would in urban settings. This more-treacherous journey between Mexico and the US was meant to discourage crossings. In conjunction with this deterrent is the use of "IDENT" technology, which utilizes a database of biometric identifiers that the Border Patrol uses to identify people

who have crossed before, resulting in increased risk of penalties such as prison time.⁶ Meanwhile, many people seeking passage to the US pay "coyotes," professional human smugglers who extort their human cargo, physically abuse them, and transport them in abject conditions. So the border then is a disgusting game of life and death in which one must decide between taking hostile terrain, facing the state's armed thugs, or being smuggled by human traffickers.

Between October 2003 and April 2004, the United States Border Patrol detained 660,390 people as they tried to cross the border. In 2004, the Border Patrol apprehended 1,139,282 people on the southern border.⁷ Between 40-60 people died trying to cross the Sonoran Desert during that same time period—three times that of the same period the previous year. Between 1998 and 2004, 1,954 persons were officially reported to have died along the US-Mexico border. The leading causes of death being drowning, car accidents, auto-pedestrian accidents, and exposure to the elements.⁸ Then in 2004, 325 persons are reported to have died. In 2005, there was a record-breaking 473 migrant deaths at the border, a 43% increase over the previous year. In 2006, 432 deaths were reported in the entire Mexican border region.⁹ But these are official counts and in no way reflect all those who have disappeared into the deserts and mountains and died uncounted.¹⁰

Despite the increased risks and deaths that border control is causing, the US is always expanding its capabilities for social control along the border—their primary motivation being to facilitate, monitor, and control the flow of the commodities, human and otherwise, that cross it. The annual budget for border enforcement operations increased sevenfold between 1980 and 1995, and then tripled between 1995 and 2001. It currently exceeds \$2.5 billion.¹¹ The number of Border Patrol agents along the southwest border more than doubled between 1993 to 1999, from roughly 3,400 to 7,200.¹² Similarly, in contract awarded to KBR (Kellogg, Brown & Root), a subsidiary of Halliburton, the DHS has allocated \$410.2 million in its 2007 budget for "Detention and Removal" to expand existing detention camps and build new ones in the event of an "immigration emergency."

New Technology, Same Intent

The virtual fence being created by Boeing is one of several initiatives by the US to expand its control over its borders. In December 2005, the US House of Representatives voted to build a separation barrier along parts of the border. A companion vote in the US Senate on May 17, 2006 included a plan to blockade 860 miles of the border with vehicle barriers and triple-layer fencing. The existing barriers were built as part of three earlier "operations" to clamp down on those who treated the border as merely another obstacle to their movement. These earlier operations were Operation Hold-the-Line in Texas (1993), Operation Gatekeeper in California (1994), and Operation Safeguard (1994) in Arizona.¹³ These utilized infrared technology, motion sensors, helicopters, all-terrain vehicles, and the erection of solid fencing intended to force people to cross the border through dangerous lands.

On September 29, 2006, the U.S. Senate confirmed House Resolution 6061, the "Secure Fence Act of 2006," authorizing and partially funding the "possible" construction of 700 miles of physical barriers along the border. First, an eight-month test of the SBI-Net will precede any construction of a physical barrier, then SBI-Net will be used alongside database, tracking, and data-mining technology for those who enter the US legally. Also, the DHS is

creating the Automated Targeting System to assign risk assessment scores to U.S. citizens who want to enter or leave the country, or whose work involves international trade. The assessments, even those showing low risk, will be kept for up to 40 years. Clearly the state is utilizing advances in technology in order to further control internal populations as well as the movement of the "illegitimate" labor force, the undocumented workers.

Resistance

The Secure Border Initiatives are only part of the state's plans for tightening border control. Last spring, the US Senate was debating HR 4437, also known as "The Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005," sponsored by Representative Sensenbrenner; it had already passed the House of Representatives in December of 2005. The bill attempted, among other things, to classify any undocumented person as a felon, criminalize anyone who would provide them aid, and end the "catch-and-release" program, which allowed for the release of border detainees into the US while awaiting trial.

Fearing deportations and widespread criminalization, there was a massive response to this bill, including strikes, student walkouts, and huge demonstrations in most major American cities. In March of 2006, hundreds of thousands of people marched in Milwaukee, Phoenix, Denver, Nashville, Detroit, San Diego, and in many other cities. In Chicago, an estimated 100,000 demonstrated, and in Los Angeles the numbers were even higher—at least 750,000 participated. Demonstrations continued throughout April as well. Over 400,000 marched in Dallas, 50,000 in San Diego, and 40,000 in St. Paul, Minnesota. On April 10th, demonstrations against HR 4437 coincided in over a hundred US cities. Thousands demonstrated in San Jose, Atlanta, Boston, Fort Myers, San Antonio, Indianapolis, New York, Oakland, Seattle, and in other major cities.¹⁴ From March through April, thousands of middle school and high school students walked out of their classes in several cities such as San Diego, Las Vegas, and Houston, among others. Some 2,500 students walked out of class in Denver. In Carson City, Nevada, 200 students walked out of class and demonstrated in front of the governor's mansion.¹⁵ In the Los Angeles area, thousands of students walked out of class on various days. Police did their duty and began citing many of them under truancy laws. Despite this, defiant walkouts continued in the LA area. In Carson, a suburb of Los Angeles, dozens of high school students broke from passivity and hurled fruit and water bottles at the police, who fired pepper balls in return and arrested three of them.¹⁶

Then on May 1st, boycotts and demonstrations were called against HR 4437 nationwide. Thousands and thousands of people demonstrated in major cities all across the US. About a million people marched through Los Angeles. Over 500,000 filled the streets in Chicago. Thousands of farm workers in California skipped work for a day and joined the demonstrations. It has been some time since such a large showing of people has taken to American streets. While no doubt the numbers were promising, the boycott is not said to have a large effect. The original version of HR 4437 was not passed, however its modified form was, taking out the provisions that would make undocumented people felons as well as shortening the mandate for new border fencing from 700 miles to 370 miles. So in the end, true to democratic form, only the most brutal aspects of the bill were taken away, making it easier to swallow.

Local and national Democratic politicians used the demonstrations as an opportunity to gather political support, flanked as they were

by various aspiring bureaucrats from the Green Party, NGOs, as well as various left-wing paper-pushers. Some activists and political parties tried to take advantage of this situation to expand their support base by starting voting drives. No doubt, the peacefulness of the demonstrations allowed for these political opportunists to present themselves safely. This lack of conflictuality was, in part, the result of a fear of a backlash from not only the state, but also from the faithful citizenry, a likely majority of white Americans who love law and order as much as they do their weekly television shows.

In order to fight the repression of all undocumented people, we have to understand that repression is part and parcel of the border. Borders' arbitrary lines are established through warfare and commerce between states. They are not a natural result of human society nor do they ever reflect a unified national identity; they are a product of states, which need to maintain control over the flow of people and goods within their fixed territories. Borders are lines of demarcation between varying degrees of exploitation found within wealthier and poorer nation-states—but exploitation nonetheless.

Unfortunately, this struggle did not extend to resisting the border, itself merely one component of state power. Ultimately, the economic warfare of capitalism causes people to risk life and limb to cross deserts, mountains, and seas will have to be combated. It is the source of a myriad of social disasters that go beyond the border. The boycotts, strikes, and school walkouts *did* however represent a widespread willingness to fight back against repression. There was a large degree of initiative in the confrontation, autonomous organization by youth, and widespread, abundant participation outside of the obedience that reigns in the US. Those demonstrating broke out of the passive silence of daily life, and the conflict presented the possibility of immense, crashing waves amidst an ocean of social peace.

Kasimere Bran



Endnotes

1. Boeing already has had \$18.3 billion in Pentagon prime contracts in the 2005 fiscal year, a \$1.2 billion increase over 2004.
2. See the sidebar for details on these subcontractors.
3. Burnett, Michael. "Netting the Border." Found at: <http://www.military-information-technology.com>
4. "Boeing's Border Control." Oct. 23, 2006. <http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_43/b4006071.htm>
5. Burnett, Michael. "Netting the Border."
6. "Deaths During Undocumented Migration: Trends and Policy Implications in the New Era of Homeland Security." *In Defense of the Alien*. Vol. 26, pp. 37-52. It can be found as a pdf. on the internet.
7. USCIS Office of Immigration Statistics.
8. "Deaths During Undocumented Migration..."
9. US Customs and Border Protection Public Affairs Office.
10. In fact, the US government did not keep official counts of the deaths of undocumented migrants until 1998, when the Border Patrol began to record deaths occurring during illegal entry into the country.
11. Reyes, B., H.P. Johnson and R. Van Swearingen "Has Increased Border enforcement Reduced Unauthorized Migration?" 2002. Research Brief, Public Policy Institute of California.
12. Andreas, P. "The Transformation of Migrant Smuggling across the U.S. - Mexico Border." 2001. *Global Human Smuggling: Comparative Perspectives*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press.
13. "Deaths During Undocumented Migration..."
14. It should be noted that in Seattle, our beloved home and home of many a rich liberal, Mayor Greg Nickels spoke, as did the County Executive Ron Sims. These assholes saw an opportunity to increase their public support, and unfortunately, the all-embracing liberal atmosphere in the city was not conducive to festive volleys of hard objects or the appropriate booing of politicians off the stage.
15. All of this information is readily available through mainstream news websites.
16. "Students Clash With Deputies as Walkouts Continue." <http://www.dailybreeze.com/news/articles/2529641.html>

AND RESPONSIBILITY GOES TO

Please send congratulatory letters to your state representatives and vote with your dollars by boycotting the following companies and buying your surveillance equipment and data management systems elsewhere.

Boeing Integrated Defense Systems (St. Louis, Missouri)- A unit of The Boeing Company, one of the world's largest space and defense companies. They are the US' largest exporter, producer of "smart" bombs, advanced missiles and missile guidance systems, F-15 fighter planes, Apache helicopters, and other military munitions, planes, and equipment. It is the second largest contractor for the US military.

Centech Group (Arlington, Virginia)- Manufactures information technology systems for engineering, network operations, data management and administration, integrated document management, software, and computer facility operation and support.

DRS Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group (Palm Bay, Florida)- A subsidiary of DRS Technologies, headquartered in Parsippany, N.J. It is a major supplier of integrated systems, services, and support for militaries, intelligence agencies, and large contractors worldwide. They will construct the first nine towers of SBI-Net.

Elbit Systems Ltd. (Fort Worth, Texas)- The US division of Elbit, the largest defense contractor in Israel. They've played a major role in border security for Israel, including the "Apartheid Wall" in Palestine. Elbit manufactures long-range cameras, various sensors, and an unmanned aerial vehicle called Skylark, which can be carried in a backpack and launched by hand. They will supply cameras for 300 radar towers, which will be able to spot people nearly 9 miles away and vehicles at distances of up to 12 miles.

Kollsman Inc. (Merrimack, New Hampshire)- A subsidiary of Elbit, they specialize in the research, development, manufacture, and support of surveillance systems. They provide advanced electro-optical and avionics systems, including enhanced vision systems and thermal imaging, to the US and foreign markets. They will supply unmanned aerial vehicles and the electro-optical and infrared cameras for SBI-Net.

L-3 Communications Government Services Inc. (Chantilly, Virginia)- Producer of information technology and security systems. They will construct the tower bases for SBI-Net. They also developed for border surveillance the WatchTower, a remote surveillance system comprised of thermal imaging, night-vision cameras, advanced camera control hardware and software, motion detection technology, and control room equipment. It integrates ground sensors, radar, and tower cameras to monitor and record movement. When motion is detected by this system, cameras automatically pan to the person crossing, and alarms are sounded. This information is sent to field agents who will then have a physical description of the person crossing and their location.

L-3 Communication Systems - West (Salt Lake City, Utah)- Designs and coordinates communication systems for intelligence collection and sharing, imagery processing, sensors, mapping, and satellite communications.

Lucent Technologies (Murray Hill, New Jersey)- Provider of systems integrating wired and wireless network design, analysis, and modeling functions spanning voice, data, and sensor communications coupled with Bell Labs advanced communications and sensor technologies.

Perot Systems (Plano, Texas)- Founded by Dallas billionaire and former presidential candidate H. Ross Perot, they will provide information technology and data management as well as contract personnel to assist the Border Patrol in transportation of detained immigrants. Last July they were awarded a contract by the US Navy to provide information systems management for in-service submarines, including the nuclear-powered Tritons, and submarine depot maintenance.

Unisys Global Public Sector (Reston, Virginia)- Producer of information technology infrastructure, information systems integration, several security systems, and information technology operations and maintenance for border surveillance. They will develop the common operating picture system, which will communicate data to border command centers when border sensors detect illegal entries, correlating and presenting these crossings to Border Patrol agents who can then dispatch field agents. They are also developers of various Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) systems for counterfeit prevention, commodity management, and national identity cards. In Australia they are developing biometrically enabled identity authentication for immigration detention centers and eventually airports. They are also conducting a six-month biometrics field-trial using fingerprint and facial recognition technologies at several Canadian ports of entry.

USIS (Washington, D.C.)- Provider of surveillance and intelligence personnel for border control operation centers.

STOP THAT TRAIN

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO THE TAV



In the fall of 2005, the struggle against the High-Velocity Train (TAV) in Valsusa, Italy once again made international headlines. With the Winter Olympics slated for February 2006 in Turin, many politicians were afraid that the advertising event of the season would be marred by social conflict. What lies behind the news coverage is in fact a decade-long fight against the construction of a major rail line that has involved strikes, mass mobilization and dozens of acts of sabotage on the part of people inhabiting the Alpine valley in the northwest of Italy. We are hoping to familiarize English speakers with these events not only because they are inspiring, but also because they point to concrete possibilities of attacking one facet of capitalism: industrial development.

The construction of TAV lines in Europe sprang from continent-wide agreements between Western European nations in the mid-1980s through the early 1990s. These states were seeking solutions to businesses' needs to more quickly move human and non-human commodities across the landscape. Thus the lines would be the physical manifestation of the integration of the economies of the European Economic Community, which later became the European Union (EU). TAV lines presently exist in France, Spain, and Italy, connecting various population/economic centers. The two strongest movements against the spread of these capillaries of profit are in the Basque territory of Spain and in the aforementioned Valsusa. But the question remains: why oppose these rail lines? After all, aren't trains less harmful to the environment than airplanes and automobiles?

From a purely ecological standpoint, the construction of the TAV in Valsusa is part of the continuation of the overall disaster of industrialism. The tunnels necessary to the Lyon-Turin leg of the TAV will be dug out of mountains known for having a high content of asbestos and uranium. Millions of tons would be excavated and then removed from the valley by thousands of dump trucks passing through the towns and villages. Residents of the valley, who are already subject to the pollution of preexisting industries there, would now be subject to some of the most carcinogenic substances known to man. The mountains themselves will be excavated, defaced and degraded, along with the destruction of much of the local plant and wildlife.

However, reducing an infrastructure project to a purely ecological issue avoids placing it in its proper context. The TAV lines are not just "bad plans" that need to be corrected or modified; they are deliberate plans that serve the interests of those who control this world. In the 19th century, the construction of railroads in the United States and Britain was an integral part of industrial capitalism because it allowed for quicker transport of raw materials to centers of production and for shipment of finished products to distant markets. Rail lines were the infrastructure that helped export coal, iron ore, silver and lumber out of certain areas, and helped import troops and settlers to dispossess native peoples. Thus they were at once the manifestation of industrial capitalism and a means to its expansion.

The TAV represents the needs of capital in a new era. France, Spain, and Italy, at the behest of the EU, are attempting to create an integrated high-speed train system that links business centers across the continent. It is also conceived of in terms of the creation of mega-cities across the continent akin to the Japanese model of urbanization. Thus the golden future of plenty falls on its face to be drowned in the mud of reality. And it is this reality that many in the Valsusa have fought so fiercely against.

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE TAV



The article that follows is not intended to be a chronology, which would be impossible to update due to the continuous development of the situation, but a stream of impressions concerning a topic of great relevance: the project of the Turin-Lyons high speed railway line, and above all, the opposition against its realization is extending itself from Valsusa to almost everywhere.

Everyone is talking about it, and there is a great succession of serious discussions, chatter, declarations of local and national politicians, and of newspapers and television news. And yet, up until a couple of months ago, politicians and news media did fuck all, because this matter, and particularly the popular unrest that accompanied it, passed in silence. From what is so much clamor now born?

From one day, or better yet, the events that marked it from the eve to the following evening: October 31, 2005. That day, on the mountain overlooking the village of Mompantero, an imposing contingent of the forces of order were supposed to accompany the technicians of the Lyon-Turin Railway company (LTF), so-called contractors, to take possession of some plots of land in order to take ultrasound readings with drills, of the geological composition of the terrain of interest in the plans of the new railway line.

For the first time in the confrontation between uniforms and opponents of the TAV, physical contact was added, and throughout the day, the occupation troops tried in vain to force their way through human blockades and the numerous barricades that hundreds of valley people and individuals in solidarity from many other regions used to prevent the police access to the sites designated for the ultrasound readings.

After a night spent in shifts on the look-out in order to spot the arrival of the armored vehicles from the valley, and in preparation for the inevitable resistance that we would have to sustain, news arrived at dawn that the Urbiano area had been occupied by the forces of order and that the uniforms had already used strong-arm tactics against demonstrators in order to clear off the road that heads toward the mountain.

Several people had already reached the area of the surveying, which was upstream, and on the necessary crossroads for reaching the sites we would confront the first attempts to force through our blockades. A human wall, without using other defensive tools, is chosen at the very last minute from among the various possibilities for resisting the thrusts, shields, and

occasional punches and kicks with which the troops in anti-riot formation would use. In that moment, I don't believe that we were more than about fifty people, between the valley residents, the "strangers," and local authorities with the tricolor sashes. However, the forces of order nonetheless determined that there were too many of us to force back on that small mountain road, which was at the peak over the escarpment, thus preventing more energetic maneuvers on the enemy's part.

It seemed to me as if time had expanded... I'm not able to say if it was a matter of minutes or hours, but there was a moment in which, crushed in that crowd, I turned to look behind me and I realized that there were no longer those few people from the first light of the dawn. Hundreds of people arrived in small groups from the forests, a human river that would continue throughout the day, adding to the blockade organized at the mountain of the Seghino bridge. They moved to reach other paths on which the advance of other contingents of uniforms could be halted, and there, erected new barricades even more substantial than those we had built in the night.

In the meantime, news spread of striking factories, road and railroad blockades at various points in the valley, and mobilizations in solidarity that were growing outside of Valsusa. The uniforms in front of us, worn out by a terrain much more hostile than city streets and plazas, were prevented from pushing us because of the risk of falling off of the cliff into the rushing stream below.

At sunset, assured by several voices – among them particularly that of the president of the low valley mountain community, Antonio Ferrentino– that technicians and the forces of order would no longer be able to take possession of the terrain that day, we went down to the valley, parading among a festive and grateful population. In reality, a few hours later, the forces of order would go up to occupy the sites, awaiting the LTF technicians, bypassing every formality of the law.

Precisely since that day, the struggle against the high-speed train in Valsusa has become "worthy of news coverage" as had never happened before. I consider it right, however, to take a few steps back in order to understand the roots of such a heartfelt and determined opposition (that certainly did not originate on the day that the press so copiously gave it prominence) and to advance a few considerations of its development in these years. I go back then with memories of the early years of the 1990s, when little or nothing was said about the havoc the TAV would cause, and in Valsusa, the struggle against this project was still not a popular struggle with wide participation. In those years, the earliest warnings about the impact it would have on territories and populations arrived from other regions over which the threat of the "train of the future" loomed, particularly from the Tuscan Mugello region. However, in Val di Susa, mainly environmentalists and representatives of the mountain Community Bassa Valle concerned themselves with the question. They tried to gather information. The plan for the new line was not yet so precisely delineated. Some local authorities, not so many as now, consulted technicians and experts, and tried to sensitize public opinion on the topic.

At the time, few said "No TAV." The discussion was rather mainly "How TAV?" Those that supported this position argued that, since it has to pass through here, let's at least see to reducing the health risks for the population and limiting environmental damages in a valley that is already heavily tormented by two state highways with a lot of traffic, an international expressway, a gigantic long-distance power line, and many polluting factories. Then

they hoped that, with so many construction sites, at least a few job prospects would open up, and that an adequate economic compensation would be seen for it passing through our land.

And while the local institutions sought reassurance from the commissions of technicians and from more highly placed politicians, the population participated rather tepidly in the debate, perhaps expecting events to be resolved by its administrators, perhaps with a hint of resignation, since some years earlier, despite protests and mobilizations, the expressway was still built. Or so it seemed to me from the meetings in which I participated in the Valley in those years.

On the other hand, little by little, concerns about the real capacity for the devastation of the TAV were spreading, and people started to realize that the promoters and builders of the new line were not taking the needs of the valley into consideration. Discontent spread among the people, and a feeling of distrust in the face of the operation began to expand more and more.

With the installation of the first ultrasound drills to get the lay of the land in the summer of 1996, a long series of acts of sabotage and attacks with fire and explosives also began. Aside from causing notable economic damage to the contracting enterprises, for the first time, official information sources were compelled to spread to the four winds the fact that the high-speed train was not viewed positively in Val di Susa. And however much the local institutions themselves strove to condemn these actions and to invite the police and judicial organs "to turn their attention most quickly to those responsible," there were not then so many expressions of disagreement with regard to the acts of sabotage from the population, as shown by the extremely slim participation in the demonstration organized on November 29, 1997, in Bussoleno, by parties, unions, and ecclesiastical authorities protesting against the attacks.

And I intend to linger here for a moment because that period of sabotage about which, in the heat of the moment, the people of Valsusa had very little to criticize. With the passing of years and the consolidation of a more complete, active involvement of the population in the mobilization against the high speed train, that time was transformed into the "dark period," the period in which, every sort of shady character was supposed to be circulating throughout those areas, from agents of the secret services to emissaries of Mafioso lobbies interested in paving over the valley. Everyone was active in the valley, except people who might have decided to take the path of deeds because they were fed up with being taken for a ride and seeing one valley after another devastated. This presented a clear break, in short, with a practice –that of sabotage and destruction– that has always been part of people's struggles in every part of the planet.

When later, three anarchists were charged with these attacks, and two of them, Edoardo "Baleno" Massari and Soledad Rosas, lost their lives while in prison, the question of sabotage gained relevance in the valley –it was presented as solely being the property of anarchists, the usual bombers. Many did not notice that these arrests were a clear warning, sent by the TAV bosses, their judges, and their uniformed protectors, to all who opposed the high speed train: "don't give us trouble, otherwise you will pay dearly!"

Perhaps, in order to make this interpretation more concrete, it might be useful to remember, especially for anyone who still has so much faith in legality and in state justice, that in the end, the charges that claimed that the three anarchists were associated with the name "Lupi Grigi" [Grey Wolves], which claimed some

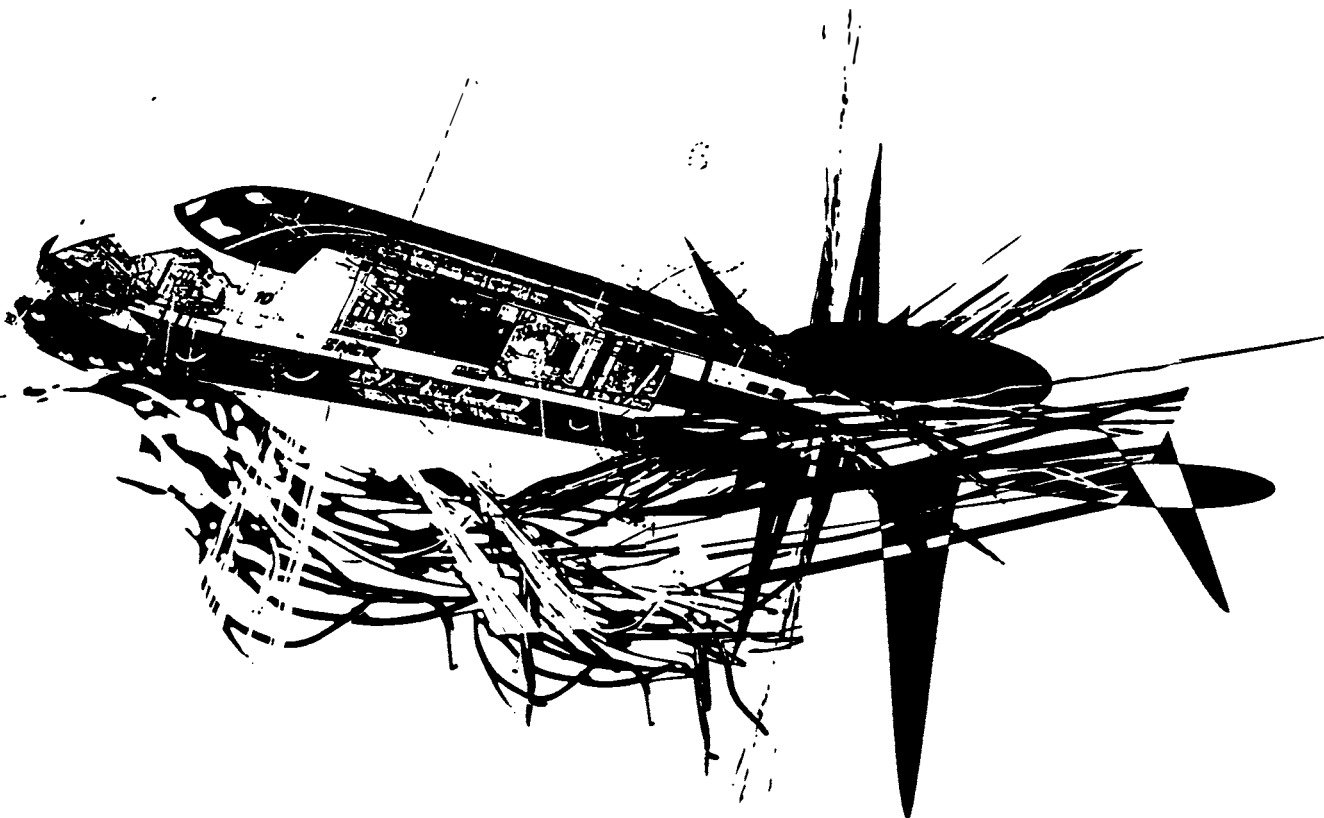
of the attacks in Valsusa, collapsed in court. The only survivor among the three was sentenced, primarily to justify his long pre-trial confinement, exclusively for theft and the firebombing of the city hall of Caprie. This means only one thing: Baleno and Soledad are dead, and Silvano suffered a long imprisonment due to the strategy by which the state tried to tame opposition against the TAV. It would be good, as we have reasserted over the years, if the population of Valsusa were to always remember this as an integral part of their struggle.

"Where were you fifteen years ago... who called you? Go back to where you came from!" In a tone that is certainly not very peaceful, the pleasant lady reproaches a young girl who is confirming her motivations and her determination to oppose the uniforms and the technicians seeking to break through the barricades in order to enter the terrain. We are at Venaus on the morning of November 30, 2005. On this day, in order to open the construction sites for the 50 km mega-tunnel, the occupation troops had to first smoothe out the road for the TAV technicians. In the meantime, since the battle of Seghino, there had been weeks of uninterrupted mobilization: road, expressway, and railway blockades, demonstrations (the most participants being 80,000 people from Bussoleno to Susa), and strikes. And also a fake bomb and some bellicose flyers on which invectives taking distance were wasted.

The lady yelled about the presence of stones and clubs for defending oneself against the police, while the young girl, who had been up all night with many others to block possible raids by the occupation troops, shows her that she has no club in her hands and no stones in her pockets. At my side, another young person, a boy, is explaining to a lady that there is no reason to direct the video camera at the faces of those who, like him, compose the human blockade opposing the enemy's advance. Because certain footage, falling into the wrong hands, provides dangerous data that could violate the freedom of those who oppose the disasters of this society. "It is for taping those who are violent...so that it will be seen that we are not provoking anyone," the impromptu video reporter answers. Meanwhile, the TAV technicians pull down ski masks so that they will not later be recognized when they go to the market, and the uniforms study from which side it is possible to bypass the barricades in order to be able to charge the blockade.

They are few, but they are there, those who have listened to the admonitions of government ministers, police officials, and the always acquiescent organs of information to isolate "anyone who comes from outside." These barbarian hordes, thirsty for blood (the name that they are given will change according to the "emergencies" of the moment), are always ready to swoop down on every conflict and situation of tension.

But once again, the enemies will not manage to get by and will maintain their position for days, at the desolate site, waiting for the propitious occasion to break through, while many, many people take turns through days and nights in keeping watch over the contested terrain.



Danger comes from outside. It is always easy for power to spread division and suspicion in order to better repress. As if opposing the disasters perpetrated against nature and human beings was something of concern only to those it directly weighs upon. Why therefore become angry about the cutting down of the Amazon rainforest, why protest if there is a war of occupation exterminating entire populations in a particular country?

People often make the effort to understand it, but those they should fear, those they should isolate and fight, are those that want to impose dire choices for the future of their lives, not those that hurry in solidarity to a place where a struggle is taking shape and give energy and determination to it. But, to clarify this, it is best to take a few steps back once again.

After the period of sabotage, a very interesting experience of popular self-organization took shape: local committees that, outside of parties and ideological frameworks, managed to focus the involvement of many people who recognized the disaster and the need for struggle against the high speed train. These were years in which the committees organized countless occasions for spreading information and discussion about the TAV question, in which their presence was noted on many occasions of popular mobilization: from general strikes to the G8 meeting in Genoa. These years included successful local (with up to 30,000 participants last June) and regional demonstrations against international summits and other situations in which the high-speed train was talked about. Last spring it reached the point of ongoing barricades that revealed a marvelous experience of communitarian sociality. All of these were occasions in which groups and persons in solidarity with their struggle stood side by side with the Valsusans. And there have been many other moments for expressing opposition to the TAV, whether the people of Valsusa were there or not. And then, why now should anyone feel it their duty to decide if the "outsiders" have a right or not to stand with those who struggle against the TAV?

"Wait another moment. We must all be there and then invade the terrain." Another time in Venaus, after the blitz with which the state finally removed the mask on the method it uses to convince people not to oppose its projects, a method many had already learned about on other occasions. It is December 8, 2005. There are many of us who want to retake what the police brutally snatched from the Valsusans. We descended upon the occupied sites from all possible paths and roads, and after an attempt to break through to the crossroads of Passeggeri. We prepared to snatch back the terrain conquered by the police to the sound of bulldozers and truncheon blows.

Since the night of the police blitz against the defenders of Venaus, other actions by the movement against the TAV have marked the days: roads and railways are still blocked, and demonstrations nearly everywhere have shown that Valsusa is not alone in its struggle.

And for now, a single image remains with me: people advancing in attack against the uniforms who are forced to shoot teargas in order not to be swept away. People whose faces were covered or uncovered, anyone who threw rocks or who ran with empty hands, anyone who kept going with whatever they had, were all against the instruments, campers, and bulldozers of the occupying forces. For once, there were truly few that had any criticisms.

The game is not over, not at all. In other lands as well, from the Basque Pyrenees to Catalonia, and as far as Slovenia, there are populations expressing a strong opposition to the passage of the European high-speed train. The popular self-organization in Valsusa was able to truly involve the people, outside of party organizations and beyond regionalism and ideology. This could be an example to follow since new opposition is developing against the projects of a "progress" that grinds up territories and communities. Our mountain is proof that it is still possible to decide our future, if the population is devoted to doing so.

Guido Mantelli

Free Alps - Gesso Valley (Cuneo area, West Alps)

From Nunatak #1, Winter 2005

Translated from Italian by Wolfi Landstreicher

ACTION REPORTS

The action reports that follow are not intended as a complete chronology of revolt. While some of these actions may seem like random events, when taken as a whole, they point to the existence of widespread social conflict. Some are easily reproducible forms of attack, and others indicate a general willingness to take part in direct action and social war. These activities, however, don't simply need to grow in quantity. Revolutionary action must lead to qualitative breaks with the daily social reproduction that constitutes our submission. Ultimately, our project is the radical transformation of relations and the destruction of this fucking world.

2007

March 1 Cheyenne, Wyoming- Several police cars were extensively damaged when a group of youths entered a police parking lot and hurled bricks through car windows.

March 1 Copenhagen, Denmark- Hundreds of youths disrupted traffic with roadblocks and bonfires and clashed with police over the city's plans to demolish the Ungdomshuset social center. Police used a helicopter to land riot police on the roof and then made 80 arrests while trying to clear squatters from the building. Demonstrators hurled cobblestones at police when an anti-terror squad began the eviction. Last August a court ordered squatters to leave the Ungdomshuset center. The city gave squatters the use of the building in 1982 but sold it in 2001 to a Christian congregation that has since tried to evict the youth. The building was used as a starting point for numerous demonstrations in the 1980s and early 1990s. On December 18, supporters of the center fought police after they tried to stop a march against the center's planned eviction. They shot fireworks and threw cobblestones at police, smashed the windows of dozens of corporate stores, and lit fires in street intersections. Some 300 people were arrested, and several cops were injured. The rioting was the worst the country had seen in at least ten years. On September 24 a youth rally for the center turned violent when people hurled cobblestones, bottles, and eggs at riot police. About 220 people were arrested.

February 28 Brussels, Belgium- Firefighters protesting for better pay and working conditions fought riot police in pitched street battles. Helmeted demonstrators blocked streets with fire trucks, fired foam hoses, and threw flares and other projectiles at police who responded with their own water cannons.

February 24 Ayios Theodoros village, Cyprus- An energy company sustained \$385,000 worth of damage to the wind masts and monitoring equipment of a wind farm. The wind masts were set up to measure and evaluate wind speed in the area. Vandals cut the cables that supported the masts, resulting in their destruction.

The village opposes the creation of wind farms because of the possible health risks from their construction.

February 22 Dili, East Timor- A group of people, tired of ongoing problems and shortages of rice, burned cars and attacked buildings belonging to the government and the United Nations. Seven UN police officers were injured and 17 government cars, three UN vehicles, and 20 houses were burnt down.

February 20 Athens, Greece- A group of about 20 anarchists attacked the General Confederation of Greek Labor union's building, in broad daylight, with rocks and petrol bombs. The assault took place as union leader Tassos Panagopoulos was attempting to exit the building. Anarchists are also suspected to be behind last year's severe beating of his predecessor in central Athens.

February 17 Providencia, Chile- An Army recruiting center was bombed by the previously unknown Federación Revuelta 14F - Gaetano Bresci Brigade. The blast tore the door off the recruitment station. The bombers left pamphlets at the scene that were against the police, prisons, and the new urban transportation system.

February 10 Dazhu, China- Thousands converged on an upscale hotel in the southwestern Chinese province of Sichuan, ransacking and setting fire to the building in protest of the death and rape of a 16-year-old girl who worked there. The girl, who worked as a karaoke hostess, was drugged and raped repeatedly by karaoke room clients until she died. The riot was triggered after the hotel posted a notice denying any involvement in the girl's death. Eventually the crowd reached 20,000 at its peak, and demonstrations continued for several days.

February 9 Iceland- The Earth Liberation Front targetted the Alcan Aluminium smelter in Hafnarfjörður. Two diggers and a crane truck were heavily damaged and the ELF signature was left on a wall.

January 16 Santa Comba, Spain- Anonymous individuals set fire to a slaughterhouse after releasing 160 cows. Damage to the building, refrigeration units, and vehicles is estimated at \$6.5 million.

January 12 Athens, Greece- The anarchist group Revolutionary Liberation Action firebombed three banks and the suburban offices of the governing New Democracy party. The bombings were in solidarity with three anarchist prisoners.

January 10 Dhaka, Bangladesh- Workers from about 20 garment factories sabotaged 10 factories and set fire to several vehicles following the sudden shutdown of a factory and rumors of an employee being killed. Early in the day, about 2,500 people from different factories gathered, lighting fires on fire in front of a factory, smashing up nearby offices, and setting up barricades on the road. They urged workers of other factories to join their demonstration, but owners of those factories prevented them. Infuriated by this, the

workers attacked a management office, smashing its windows, set fire to nine vehicles, looted and ransacked, beat office employees who tried to stop them, and disrupted traffic for four hours. Police fired teargas to disperse them.

January 7 Nandigram, India- Villagers blockaded all roads and collapsed bridges leading to nine villages in order to stop the government and private companies from taking over farm land to build two Special Economic Zones. The West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation is one of the companies interested in seizing their land to construct an automobile factory. Clashes broke out between those opposed to the land acquisition and government supporters in favor of it. Several people were reported to have died in the fighting though police were not sent into the area in order to avoid raising tensions. The region is known as a bastion of anti-capitalist sentiment.

2006

December 31 Athens, Greece- Some 50 hooded anarchists celebrated the arrival of the New Year with an attack on the Korydallos Prison where one of their comrades is confined. They arrived on motorcycles shortly before midnight and threw smoke bombs and fireworks at police officers outside the building and dropped leaflets demanding the release of their comrade.

December 31 Duraz, Bahrain- Two masked assailants attacked a bus of police officers with molotov cocktails, seriously wounding one, and destroying the bus.

November 12 Sichuan Province, China- Xiong Hongwei, age 3, died after mistakenly drinking pesticide and then being refused medical treatment at a hospital for lack of funds. In response, 2,000 people attacked the Guangan No. 2 People's Hospital, smashing windows and equipment and forcing the six-story hospital to close. At least 10 people were injured in clashes with police. One person said, "they were using loudspeakers to tell the people not to believe rumors and to trust the government."

November 10 Sanzhou village, Guangdong Province, China- Some 5,000 villagers clashed with police and blockaded a warehouse built on government-seized land as officials and foreign investors gathered there for an official opening ceremony. The villagers were demanding an investigation into corruption by local officials. The state refused and brought in riot police and tear gas to disperse them. Among the more massive confrontations happening in recent years over land disputes in China: November 6, 2004- Paramilitary troops put down an uprising of 100,000 farmers in Sichuan province. April 10, 2005- 20,000 peasants drove off more than 1,000 riot police in Huaxi, Zhejiang province. These are just a few of the thousands of upheavals that occur in China every year.

November 9 Pike County, Pennsylvania- Someone torched at least nine homes under construction near Milford in less than five months. The first one was set ablaze on June 16.

October 26 Lakeland, Florida- A large, under-construction 5,000-square-foot house was destroyed by arson, an estimated loss of about \$600,000. The fire was similar to one that was reported on Oct. 15, in a planned subdivision nearby. In that fire, a 4,700-square-foot house was destroyed.

October 23 Peru- After two weeks of blockading and halting half of Peru's oil production, the tribal Achuar people of the remote northern Peruvian Amazon won an agreement which will effectively end 35 years of dumping over a million barrels-per-day of toxic wastewater into local rivers and streams. The first 30 years of dumping was thanks to Occidental Petroleum and the last five by Argentina's Pluspetrol.

October 11 Uruma, Okinawa, Japan- U.S. missile interceptor equipment was moved to an American military base in southern Japan after being delayed for three days in port because of disruptions and demonstrations by locals.

October 6 Beirut, Lebanon- Residents hurled stones and blocked streets with burning tires and trash when officers arrived to enforce a government order to remove illegal shacks in the southern districts. Armed men in the crowd began shooting, prompting officers to return fire. One person was killed and at least 16 were wounded. Rioters damaged three police vehicles.

October 5 Concepcion, Chile- On the outskirts of the University of Concepción in Chile, members of the indigenous Mapuche group "Coordinadora Arauco Malleco" (CAM) and others took over streets and battled police in response to repression. A street was blockaded and a bank was attacked. Police responded with a water cannon and tear gas. After an hour of combat, with various tires set on fire and a large quantity of Molotov firebombs thrown, the police retreated, and no one was arrested. CAM distributed a communiqué, saying in part: "Freedom is not obtained by negotiating or begging, nor with pitiful petitions. Freedom must be gained day by day, with resistance and struggle."

October 5 Wellston, Missouri- The homes of two Wellston city council members were attacked with molotov cocktails following their recent discussions to consider having St. Louis County police patrol their city.

October 2 Les Mureaux, France- Police in a suburb of Paris used tear gas, rubber pellets, and fired a warning shot to disperse a crowd that surrounded their vehicle. Six officers and a civilian were injured during clashes that broke out after police tried to stop a driver for not wearing a seat belt. The driver refused to stop, and later crashed into another police car that tried to block his path. About 250 people gathered, some carrying homemade shields, pick handles, and stones, and threatened the police officers, saying: "You won't get out of the car alive." The crowd set a police car, and the car that was initially stopped, on fire before dispersing when more police officers arrived.

October 1 Hilt, California- The Earth Liberation Front caused \$500,000 damage to logging equipment. Dirt was put into fuel tanks, hoses, lines, and belts were sawed through, and computer equipment ripped out of vehicles. The action is expected to put the company out of operation for several months.

September 17 Scottsdale, Arizona- A fire destroyed an 11,000-square-foot mansion under construction in a gated community. Although there is no estimate of the damage, the home was completely destroyed. This is one of three unsolved luxury home arsons in the area in the past year.

September 27 Kuwait City, Kuwait- A temporary police station soon to be inaugurated was set on fire, destroying most of the building.

September 18 Gatineau, Ottawa- A small explosion at the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs office caused minor damage. The explosion was caused by a blasting cap, which is used as a detonator for more powerful explosives. This is one of many recent incidents of sabotage at their offices.

September 3 Luzhsky district, Leningradskaya region, Russia- Some people tore down fences around a mink farm and opened the cages of an estimated 30,000 mink, causing some \$375,000 in damages. This is the largest raid on a mink farm ever.

September 1 Bangladesh- In the face of mass revolt, the Bangladeshi government was forced to renounce an opencast mining project in Phulbari. London-based Asia Energy was planning to invest \$1.1 billion in the mining of 570 million tons of coal in the area over a 30-year period. The mine would have displaced some 100,000 people, many of them from the Santal indigenous tribe. Some 30,000 people, mainly farmers and indigenous people, including women, armed with bows and arrows, sticks, rocks, and machetes, revolted against the project for 5 days. In addition, a nationwide general strike was called in solidarity against the mine. All roads to Phulbari were blockaded. In Dhaka, the strike left schools, shops, colleges, and businesses closed and vehicles off the road. The main port at Chittagong was shut down. Over 10,000 police and paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles were deployed; they opened fire into a demonstration, killing six and wounding more than 300. After a weekend of widespread insurrection, military troops withdrew, as did Asia Energy staff, and the town fell into the hands of thousands of rebels, who, still angry about those shot to death, ransacked the company's offices. Houses and businesses belonging to those collaborating with Asia Energy were torched. Riot police were incapable of stopping the unrest and stood by silently. An information center of Asia Energy and other businesses in town were set ablaze. The angry mob turned down the request of police officials to show restraint. "We would beat them to death if they are captured," one of the demonstrators yelled.

July 20 Tracy, California- Extensive damage was caused when someone torched the second floor of a house under construction. The house was nearly completed and sustained \$200,000 in damage. This was the fourth house under construction in the Bay Area to be set on fire in the last month. In early May, three houses in the same project area were flooded, causing \$100,000 in damage. Also in the last few months, 20 French doors, which cost \$300-\$400 each, were smashed on constructed homes.

July 15 Rome, Italy- Taxi drivers went on wildcat strike a day after talks between unions and the government broke down. About 4,000 taxi drivers occupied the city center. Wildcat strikes of taxi drivers also occurred in Turin, Genoa, and Naples.

June 23 Mokena, Illinois- Someone repeatedly damaged construction equipment at a housing development site soon after hundreds of trees, some of them 200 years old, were cut down to make way for construction.

June 11 Grass Valley, California- A construction site was sabotaged when anonymous individuals broke windows, wrecked a water tank, cut hoses, tore out the electrical harnesses of three drill rigs, and spray-painted slogans on heavy construction equipment. Circle A's were left on several pieces of equipment.

June 10 Dubai, United Arab Emirates- The manager and deputy manager of a construction company were taken hostage by over 300 Chinese workers at a labor camp. They were protesting the company's move to deport some workers who had stopped work because of non-payment of their wages.

June 8 Glendale, Arizona- At least \$5 million in damage was done to two Wal-Mart stores after fires were set in them during business hours. Smoke and sprinkler water, not the fire directly, caused most of the damage.

June 8 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania- Angered over the recent US military massacres in Haditha and elsewhere in Iraq, over 50 people demonstrated in the streets of an upscale neighborhood. Street traffic was blocked and rocks were thrown at several corporate stores.

June 8 Greece- Students held occupations and refused to attend classes at more than 150 universities throughout the country against a new law that would privatize schools and possibly end free tuition. Police attacked a large demonstration in Athens and wounded hundreds with clubs and tear gas. Some responded to the repression by burning shops and luxury cars in addition to throwing firebombs and rocks at police.

June 7 Brasilia, Brazil- Hundreds of landless Brazilian farm workers stormed a congressional building in this capital city. They smashed windows, tables and doors, overturned a car, and clashed with police and security guards. They forced their way into the lower house of Brazil's Congress, reaching a room next to one of the main debating chambers where a parliamentary session was taking place. A car was destroyed that was being displayed as part of a prize drawing for congressional staff. The president condemned the demonstration as an act of vandalism against democracy. Poor fucking democracy.

June 7 Ntotoso, Ghana- Youth in the Ahafo Project Area of the Newmont Gold Ghana Limited mine disrupted a company ceremony celebrating worker training before intervention by soldiers and police. The youth blocked all access routes to the company's project site where the ceremony was to take place and burnt tires in the middle of the road.

June 6- July 19 Elyria, Ohio- Several developments go under attack: someone burned a portion of a condominium, broke a window, slashed the tires of a semi truck and burned a portion of it. On June 15, another condo was damaged by fire. On July 15, someone broke into a model home of a condo development and set a fire that caused \$230,000 damage. A few days before, a fire destroyed the majority of the westernmost unit of a condo. A day later another fire did the same to the easternmost unit. Two destroyed halves makes one destroyed whole.

June 5 Toronto, Canada- A one-day wildcat transit strike paralyzed the city's massive transit system, forcing 800,000 commuters to find alternative means of transportation to their crummy jobs.

June 1 Gilbert, Arizona- Seven houses under construction were set fire to, causing an estimated \$500,000 in damages, destroying four houses, and damaging three others. According to authorities, the fire started in one house and spread quickly to the others because the houses were in the framing stage, a vulnerable point because untreated lumber burns quickly.

June 1 Santiago, Chile- For the second day in a row, police used water cannons to scatter violent demonstrations. Nearly 600,000 public high school students were on a nationwide strike demanding a reduction of inequality between rich and poor schools. The clashes came a day after police attacked student protests in the capital, injuring at least 12 people and arresting more than 700 others.

May 29-30 Olympia, WA- Shipments of Stryker patrol vehicles bound for Iraq were routinely disrupted with blockades and lockdowns, resulting in the arrest of 16 people. Several people tried to pry open the port's gate with a steel pole. A few demonstrators tore down the front fence of the port, and some rocks and bottles were thrown at police. The majority of the protesters, however, passively resisted.

May 24 Tehran, Iran- Stone-throwing students fought police and Islamic vigilantes in response to restrictions imposed by the government. Students covered their faces with scarves, lit fires outside dormitories, and hurled stones. Forty policemen and four students were injured, and some twenty students were taken by Islamic vigilantes after they broke into their dorms.

May 17 Managua, Nicaragua- In response to a government hike in bus fares, students clashed with police on the grounds of the Avenida Universitaria and nearby streets. Students used mortar bombs and stones while police responded with rubber bullets, tear gas, and batons. Five students were arrested and subsequently accused of possessing illegal arms.

May 11 Bougainville, Papua New Guinea- People armed with rifles and homemade weapons burned three police stations and ransacked a government office. One policeman was seriously injured.

May 10 Prescott, Arizona- An excavator and bulldozer were sabotaged at a construction site, causing \$10,000 in damages.

April 25, 2006 Athens, Greece- Ten shops and four cars were damaged during violent demonstrations against a visit by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Riot police hurled teargas at demonstrators trying to march to the US embassy.

April 21 KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa- The disruptions by an ongoing worker's strike of the Telkom telecommunications company have increased due to widespread sabotage of the company's infrastructure including landlines, cables, and distribution boxes. At least 65 street distribution cabinets, which are used to connect phone service to customers, had their connection points cut and others were incinerated. Large-scale theft and cutting of cables was reported throughout the region.

April 21 Michoacan State, Mexico- Hundreds of police stormed the Sicartsa steel plant, shooting dead two workers and firing tear gas, as running battles with stone-throwing strikers spilled out onto the streets. The strikers hurled rocks and molotov cocktails at police and torched cars. Police failed to regain control of the plant and workers continued the wildcat strike, then in its third week, and a blockade of the plant. The strike was in response to government repression of a union official.

April 16 Bobcaygeon, Ontario, Canada- A home under construction was set alight, causing \$200,000 in damages.

April 14 Maui, Hawaii- Fire was set to the Pukalani Country Club, canceling over 600 people's reservations for Easter. The fire destroyed 35 golf carts and then spread to the club's restaurant and pro shop. Damages are estimated at \$1.5 million.

April 7 New Caledonia, South Pacific Islands- Inco Ltd., one of the biggest nickel miners in the world, suspended construction of the \$1.9 billion Goro nickel mine after recent sabotage to water lines and a radio communications tower caused \$10 million damage. This comes after earlier attacks damaged trucks and excavators and blocked a number of access roads. Inco Ltd. said there has been a new round of attacks as locals stepped up their opposition to the massive construction project.

March 30 Modena, Italy- A group calling itself "Friends of the Pig" placed 25 liters of gas and 6 sticks of dynamite at the Beccastecca Experimental Institute. Part of their communiqué stated: "...destroy the GMO's breeds as soon as they start, attack the structures where research is done...build a determinate and daily opposition to the engineering of life."

March 15 Toledo, Ohio- In conjunction with the three-year anniversary of the war in Iraq, an Army Recruiting Center had its window smashed in with a brick. Part of the communiqué read: "out of Iraq, out of Toledo."

March 7 Accokeek, Maryland- A fire devastated a home under construction in the latest series of about a dozen arsons here over the past two years. This most recent blaze caused \$500,000 in damage. Similar fires of developed homes in Accokeek since January 2004 have caused \$2.5 million worth of damage.

March 1-3 Mexico- More than a quarter of a million miners and steelworkers went on wildcat strikes at 70 companies in at least eight states from central to northern Mexico, paralyzing the mining industry. The strike was sparked by the state's attempt to remove the Mexican Miners Union's top officer and replace him with an official backed by the Grupo Mexico mining company. The wildcat strike erupted little more than a week after a mining accident in February in San Juan de las Sabinas that left 65 workers dead.

Disclaimer: The contents of this magazine are in no way intended to encourage, instruct, incite, or promote illegal activity. This magazine is merely entertainment to be passively consumed.



NEWS



AND WHATNOT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Destroy All Restaurants

Abolish Restaurants is a hilarious, insightful, and well-illustrated "worker's critique of the food service industry." Authored and distributed by Prole.info, and printed by Eberhardt Press, Abolish Restaurants breaks down restaurants piece by piece from a left communist perspective. Highly recommended! Available for \$5 from www.prole.info.

War On Misery #2 Available

War On Misery is a St. Louis-based publication "against the drudgery of daily life and for a holiday without beginning or end." The magazine is 12 pages and has extensive action reports, a piece about taking advantage of food stamps, and an excellent article about a string of arsons against development around St. Louis. Too hot to handle; too cold to hold. Available online: www.stlimc.org/newswire/display/2833/index.php

Fire to the Prisons

A Crime Called Freedom: The Writings of Os Cangaceiros is a recently published compilation of texts from the French anti-authoritarian communist group. Translated by Wolfi Landstreicher and published by Eberhardt Press, this amazing book details the political perspectives of Os Cangaceiros as well as their many actions of solidarity against the French prison system. Revolutionary, relevant, recommended. Available for \$7 from Eberhardt Press: www.eberhardtpress.org.

REPRESSION

Free to be Re-Sentenced

The Oregon Court of Appeals has ruled that Jeffrey "Free" Luers will get a new reduced sentence that could be as much as 15 years shorter than his current one. He was convicted of three counts of arson and three counts of attempted arson and sentenced to 23 years in prison in 2001 for damaging three SUVs in Eugene. The court ordered him to serve his sentences consecutively, but according to the court of appeals, Luers' judge should have ordered that they be served concurrently. It's possible that he could be released from prison as early as 2008. Finally some good news for Free. Funds, however, are still needed for legal costs. More info: www.freefreenow.org

Ex-Black Panthers Arrested

In January, eight ex-Black Panther Party (BPP) members were arrested on charges stemming from the 1971 shooting death of a San Francisco police officer, an act that was claimed by the Black Liberation Army. Seven of the men arrested were charged with murder and conspiracy. The arrested are Ray Michael Boudreaux, Richard Brown, Henry Watson Jones, Francisco Torres, and Harold Taylor. Herman Bell and Jalil Abdul Muntaqim, who are both currently imprisoned in New York, were also charged. Another suspect, Ronald Stanley Bridgeforth, is still being sought. These arrests are part of a renewed effort on the part of US state to reopen closed cases and take revenge for the disorder of the 1960s and 1970s. In late 2005 several ex-BPP members were subpoenaed before a San Francisco grand jury, but they refused to testify, spending several weeks in jail until the grand jury expired. Solidarity is urgently needed.

Sedition Books Burns Down

On February 26, 2007 an early morning fire burned down Sedition Books, Houston's anarchist book store, lending library, and Indymedia office. Police say the blaze was probably intentionally set because it originated outside of the building.



DEVELOPMENT

Gas Mining in Western Australia

Gorgon Joint Ventures and its major partner, Chevron, are planning to construct a \$15 billion facility on Barrow Island to exploit gas fields 200 kilometers off the Western Australian coast. They want to export some 10 million tons of natural gas per year. This project would threaten the estimated one-third of the Pilbara flat-back turtle population, which uses Barrow Island for nesting.

Three Gorges Displacement

The Chinese government's own state media reported in October that the massive Three Gorges dam project will eventually displace 1.4 million people. The number of people already forced to relocate has reached 1.2 million people. The 1.4-mile long, \$22 billion dam in the midsection of the Yangtze River was completed last spring, but its power-generation facilities are not slated to be finished until 2008. This is one of many projects in China aimed at creating infrastructure to support the energy demands of rapidly increasing industrial production as well as providing energy for the growth of its modernizing urban centers.

Development in Iceland

Europe's highest concrete rock fill dam was activated late last September in the remote eastern Icelandic highlands. The Karahnjúkar dam is part of a hydroelectric project constructed by the national energy company to power an aluminum smelter being built by Alcoa Inc. Part of the dam's activation included the sealing off of the glacial Jokulsa a Dal River. It is the first step in creating what will ultimately become a 22-square mile reservoir, flooding a swath of the Icelandic highlands. The hydroelectric project involves the damming of two glacial rivers and creating a 45-mile water tunnel system. The \$1.5 billion investment to build the hydroelectric plant is the largest of its kind in Icelandic history. It will power Iceland's third aluminum smelter, but three more smelter projects are under consideration around the country, including the expansion of an existing plant.

Poisoning of the Songhua

The Songhua River, the site of a massive chemical spill last year that halted water supplies to millions of people, has experienced more than 130 water pollution spills in the past 11 months. It is estimated that every few days chemical discharge is dumped into the Songhua. China faces a critical water shortage, in part, because of chronic pollution and chemical accidents. Most of China's canals, rivers, and lakes are severely poisoned by agricultural and household pollution. The country has over 20,000 chemical factories located along major rivers, including 10,000 along the Yangtze River, 4,000 along the Yellow River, and an unknown number on the Songhua River. In November of 2005, a chemical plant explosion spilled tons of benzene and other toxic material into the Songhua, halting water supplies to millions in China and Russia. These toxic spills are a result of mass production and the expansion of China's economy.

Guatemalan Dispossession

On January 8, 2007, some 200 soldiers, 400 national police, private security, and riot police occupied and evicted 438 families of Qeq'chi (Kekchi) Maya indigenous settlements in El Estor, La Unión, La Pista, and La Revolución. Private security burnt many homes while police dismantled others. The evictions were carried out on behalf of the Guatemala Nickel Company, a subsidiary of the Vancouver-based Skye Resources Nickel Mining Co., which claims to own title to the disputed land. This same company was behind forced removals of indigenous people in the 1960s as well.

South Australian Copper and Gold Mining

A \$598 million copper and gold project of Oxiana Limited is planned in South Australia. It will be the first major mining project in the region since the expansion of the Olympic Dam in the late 1990s. The plan includes the development of an open-pit mine, a conventional grinding and flotation processing plant, the construction of a permanent village to accommodate a 400-person workforce, and necessary infrastructure. Fluor Corporation of Irving, Texas was awarded a \$492 million contract to provide engineering, procurement, construction, operations, maintenance, and project management.



RESOURCES



Publications:

325
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Tarantula
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Portland, OR 97204
www.socialwar.net

Internet Links:

Anti-Politics
www.anti-politics.net

Earth Liberation Prisoners Support Network (UK)
www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk

Guerra Sociale (Italy)
www.guerrasociale.org

Insurrectionary Anarchists of the Coast Salish Territories (Canada)
www.geocities.com/insurrectionary_anarchists

Klinamen: portal por la autogestión editorial (Spain)
www.klinamen.org

Mariposas del Caos (Argentina)
www.mariposasdelcaos.cjb.net

Prole.info: Pamphlets and Online Texts for the Angry Wage Worker
www.prole.info

Quiver Online Pamphlet Library
www.anti-politics.net/distro

Recommended Readings:

- Against the Megamachine: Essays on Empire and its Enemies by David Watson
- At Daggers Drawn With The Existent, Its Defenders, And Its False Critics by Anon. (pamphlet)
- The Bonnot Gang by Richard Parry (story of the French illegalists)
- Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation by Silvia Federici (about the origins of capitalism)
- Critical Thinking as an Anarchist Weapon by Wolfi Landstreicher et al. (pamphlet)
- Direct Action: Memoirs of an Urban Guerilla by Anne Hansen
- Dynamite: A Century of Class Violence in America 1830-1930 by Louis Adamic
- History of the Makhnovist Movement 1918-1921 by Peter Arshinov
- Killing King Abacus #1 & #2 by Sasha K., Leila T., and Wolfi L. (available online)
- The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker
- A Crime Called Freedom: The Writings of Os Cangaceiros by Os Cangaceiros
- Rebels Against the Future: The Luddites and Their War on the Industrial Revolution by Kirkpatrick Sale
- The Reproduction of Daily Life by Fredy Perlman
- Sabate: Guerilla Extraordinary by Antonio Tellez (story of a Spanish anarchist guerilla)
- Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background by Paul Avrich (US-Italian insurrectionary history)
- The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements And The Decolonization Of Everyday Life by George Katsiaficas
- The Undesirables: Class Struggle at the Turn of the 21st Century by Anon. (pamphlet)

A MURDER OF CROWS
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